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THE
Seasons

BY

James Thomson:

a New Edition;

With the last Corrections,
Additions, and improvements:
being the completest
ever yet published.

PARIS 1809.

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THE LIFE
OF
JAMES THOMSON.

JAMES THOMSON was born September the 7th, 1700, at Ednam, in the shire of Roxburgh, of which his father was pastor. His mother, whose name was Hume, was co-heiress of a small estate in that country. It was probably in commiseration of the difficulty with which Mr. Thomson's father supported his family, having nine children, that Mr. Riccarton, a neighbouring minister, discovering in James uncommon promises of future excellence, undertook to superintend his education, and provide him books.

He was taught the common rudiments of learning at the school of Jedburgh, a place which he delights to recollect in his poem of 'Autumn;' but was not considered by his master as superior to common boys, though in those early days he amused his patron and his friends with poetical compositions; with which, however, he so little pleased himself, that on every new-year's day he threw into the fire all the productions of the foregoing year.

From the school he was removed to Edinburgh, where he had not resided two years when his father died, and left all his children to the care of their

mother, who raised upon her little estate what money a mortgage could afford, and, removing with her family to Edinburgh, lived to see her son rising into eminence.

The design of Thomson's friends was to breed him a minister. He lived at Edinburgh, as at school, without distinction or expectation, till, at the usual time, he performed a probationary exercise by explaining a psalm. His diction was so poetically splendid, that Mr. Hamilton, the professor of divinity, reproved him for speaking language unintelligible to a popular audience.

This rebuke is said to have repressed his thoughts of an ecclesiastical character, and he probably cultivated with new diligence his talent for poetry, which, however, was in some danger of a blast; for submitting his productions to some who thought themselves qualified to criticise, he heard of nothing but faults; but finding other judges more favourable, he did not suffer himself to sink into absolute despondence.

He easily discovered that the only stage on which a poet could appear, with any hope of advantage, was London; a place too wide for the operation of petty competition and private malignity; where merit might soon become conspicuous, and would find friends as soon as it became reputable to befriend it. A lady, who was acquainted with his mother, advised him to the journey, and promised some countenance and assistance, which however he never received.

At his arrival in town he found his way to Mr.

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Mallet, then tutor to the sons of the duke of Montrose. He had recommendations to several persons of consequence, which he had tied up carefully in his handkerchief; but, as he passed along the street, with the gaping curiosity of a new-comer, his attention was upon every thing rather than his pocket, and his magazine of credentials was stolen from him.

His first want was a pair of shoes. For the supply of all his necessities, his whole fund was his 'Winter,' which for a time could find no purchaser; till, at last, Mr. Millar, a bookseller in the Strand, was persuaded to buy it at a low price; and this low price he had for some time reason to regret; but, by accident, Mr. Whatley, a man not wholly unknown among authors, happening to turn his eye upon it, was so delighted that he ran from place to place celebrating its excellence. Thomson obtained likewise the notice of Aaron Hill, whom (being friendless and indigent, and glad of kindness) he courted with every expression of servile adulation.

'Winter' was dedicated to Sir Spencer Compton, but attracted no regard from him to the author, till Aaron Hill awakened his attention by some verses addressed to Thomson, and published in one of the newspapers, which censured the great for their neglect of ingenious men. Thomson then received a present of twenty guineas, of which he gives this account to Mr. Hill:

'I hinted to you in my last, that on Saturday 'morning I was with Sir Spencer Compton. A

'certain gentleman, without my desire, spoke to 'him concerning me: his answer was, that I had 'never come near him. Then the gentleman put 'the question: If he desired that I should wait on 'him? he returned, he did. On this, the gentle-'man gave me an introductory letter to him. He 'received me in what they commonly call a civil 'manner; asked me some common-place ques-'tions; and made me a present of twenty guineas. 'I am very ready to own that the present was 'larger than my performance deserved; and shall 'ascribe it to his generosity, or any other cause, 'rather than the merit of the address."

The poem, which, being of a new kind, few would venture at first to like, by degrees gained upon the public; and one edition was very speedily succeeded by another.

Thomson's credit was now high, and every day brought him new friends; among others Dr. Rundle, a man afterwards unfortunately famous, sought his acquaintance, and found his qualities such that he recommended him to the lord chancellor Talbot.

'Winter' was accompanied, in many editions, not only with a preface and dedication, but with poetical praises by Mr. Hill, Mr. Mallet (then Malloch), and Mira, the fictitious name of a lady once too well known. Why the dedications to 'Winter' and the other Seasons are, contrary to custom, left out in the collected works, is not known.

The next year (1727) he distinguished himself by three publications; of 'Summer,' in pursuance of his plan; of 'A Poem on the Death of Sir Isaac

Newton,' which he was enabled to perform as an exact philosopher by the instruction of Mr. Gray; and of 'Britannia,' a kind of poetical invective against the ministry, whom the nation then thought not forward enough in resenting the depredations of the Spaniards. By this piece he declared himself an adherent to the opposition, and had therefore no favour to expect from the court.

Thomson, having been some time entertained in the family of lord Binning, was desirous of testifying his gratitude by making him the patron of his 'Summer;' but the same kindness which had first disposed lord Binning to encourage him, determined him to refuse the dedication, which was by his advice addressed to Mr. Dodington, a man who had more power to advance the reputation and fortune of the poet.

'Spring' was published next year, with a dedication to the countess of Hertford, whose practice it was to invite every summer some poet into the country, to hear her verses and assist her studies. This honour was one summer conferred on Thomson, who took more delight in carousing with lord Hertford and his friends, than assisting her ladyship's poetical operations, and therefore never received another summons.

'Autumn,' the season to which the 'Spring' and 'Summer' are preparatory, still remained unsung, and was delayed till he published (1730) his works collected [1].

[1] The autumn was his favourite season for poetical

He produced in 1727 the tragedy of 'Sophonisba,' which raised such expectation, that every rehearsal was dignified with a splendid audience, collected to anticipate the delight that was preparing for the public. It was observed, however, that nobody was much affected, and that the company rose as from a moral lecture.

Thomson was, not long afterwards, by the influence of Dr. Rundle, sent to travel with Mr. Charles Talbot, the eldest son of the Chancellor. He was yet young enough to receive new impressions, to have his opinions rectified, and his views enlarged; nor can he be supposed to have wanted that curiosity which is inseparable from an active and comprehensive mind. He may therefore now be supposed to have revelled in all the joys of intellectual luxury; he was every day feasted with instructive novelties; he lived splendidly without expense; and might expect, when he retured home, a certain establishment.

At this time a long course of opposition to Sir Robert Walpole had filled the nation with clamours for liberty, of which no man felt the want, and with care for liberty, which was not in danger. Thomson, in his travels on the continent, found or fancied so many evils arising from the tyranny of other governments, that he resolved to write a very long poem, in five parts, upon Liberty.

compositions, and the deep silence of the night, the time he commonly chose for study; so that he was often heard walking in his library, repeating what he was to correct or write out the next day.

While he was busy on the first book, Mr. Talbot died; and Thomson, who had been rewarded for his attendance by the place of secretary of the briefs, pays, in the initial lines, a decent tribute to his memory.

Upon this great poem two years were spent, and the author congratulated himself upon it as his noblest work; but an author and his reader are not always of a mind. Liberty called in vain upon her votaries to read her praises, and reward her encomiast: her praises were condemned to harbour spiders, and to gather dust.

Thomson now lived in ease and plenty, and seemed for a while to have suspended his poetry; but he was soon called back to labour by the death of the Chancellor, for his place then became vacant; and though lord Hardwicke delayed for some time to give it away, Thomson's bashfulness, or pride, or some other motive, withheld him from soliciting; and the new Chancellor would not give him what he would not ask.

He now relapsed to his former indigence; but the prince of Wales was at that time struggling for popularity, and by the influence of Mr. Lyttelton, professed himself the patron of wit: to him Thomson was introduced, and being interrogated about the state of his affairs, said, 'that they were in a more poetical posture than formerly;' and had a pension allowed him of one hundred pounds a year.

Being now obliged to write, he produced (1738) the tragedy of Agamemnon, which was much short-

ened in the representation. It had the fate which most commonly attends mythological stories, and was only endured, but not favoured. It struggled with such difficulty through the first night, that Thomson, coming late to his friends with whom he was to sup, excused his delay by telling them how the sweat of his distress had so disordered his wig, that he could not come till he had been refitted by a barber.

He so interested himself in his own drama, that, if I remember right, as he sat in the upper gallery, he accompanied the players by audible recitation, till a friendly hint frighted him to silence. Pope countenanced 'Agamemnon,' by coming to it the first night, and was welcomed to the theatre by a general clap. He had much regard for Thomson, and once expressed it in a poetical Epistle sent to Italy.

He was soon after employed, in conjunction with Mr. Mallet, to write the masque of 'Alfred,' which was acted before the prince at Cliefden-house.

His next work (1745) was 'Tancred and Sigismunda,' the most successful of all his tragedies, for it still keeps its turn upon the stage.

His friend Mr. Lyttelton was now in power, and conferred upon him the office of surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands; from which, when his deputy was paid, he received about three hundred pounds a year.

The last piece that he lived to publish was the 'Castle of Indolence,' which was many years under his hand, but was at last finished with great

accuracy. The first canto opens a scene of lazy luxury, that fills the imagination.

He was now at ease, but was not long to enjoy it; for, by taking cold on the water between London and Kew, he caught a disorder which terminated in a fever that put an end to his life, August 27, 1748. He was buried in the church of Richmond, without an inscription; but a monument has been erected to his memory in Westminster-abbey.

Thomson was of stature above the middle size, and 'more fat than bard beseems;' of a dull countenance, and a gross, inanimated uninviting appearance; silent in mingled company, but cheerful among select friends, and by his friends very tenderly and warmly beloved.

He left behind him the tragedy of 'Coriolanus,' which was, by the zeal of his patron Sir George Lyttelton, brought upon the stage for the benefit of his family, and recommended by a prologue, which Quin, who had long lived with Thomson in fond intimacy, spoke in such a manner as shewed him 'to be,' on that occasion, 'no actor.' The commencement of this benevolence is very honourable to Quin; who is reported to have delivered Thomson, then known to him only for his genius, from an arrest, by a very considerable present; and its continuance is honourable to both; for friendship is always the sequel of obligation. By this tragedy a considerable sum was raised, of which, part discharged his debts, and the rest was remitted to his sisters.

The benevolence of Thomson was fervid, but not active; he would give on all occasions what assistance his purse could supply; but the office of intervention or solicitation he could not conquer his sluggishness sufficiently to perform [1].

Among his peculiarities was a very unskilful and inarticulate manner of pronouncing any lofty or solemn composition. He was once reading to Dodington, who, being himself a reader eminently elegant, was so much provoked by his odd utterance, that he snatched the paper from his hands, and told him that he did not understand his own verses.

The biographer of Thomson has remarked, that an author's life is best read in his works: his observation was not well-timed. Savage, who lived much with Thomson, once told me, how he heard a lady remarking that she could gather from his works three parts of his character, that he was a 'great lover, a great swimmer, and rigorously abstinent;' but, said Savage, he knows not any love but that of the sex; he was perhaps never in cold water in his life, and he indulges himself in all the luxury that comes within his reach. Yet Savage always spoke with the most eager praise of his social qualities, his warmth and constancy of friendship, and his adherence to his first acquaintance, when the

[1] As for the distinguishing qualities of his mind and heart, they are better represented in his writings, than they can be by the pen of a biographer: there, his love of mankind, of his country, and his friends; his devotion to the Supreme Being; and his humanity and benevolence, shine out in every page.

advancement of his reputation had left them behind him.

As a writer, he is entitled to one praise of the highest kind: his mode of thinking, and of expressing his thoughts, is original. His blank verse is no more the blank verse of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauses, his diction, are of his own growth, without transcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on nature and on life with the eye which nature bestows only on a poet; the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute. The reader of the 'Seasons' wonders that he never saw before what Thomson shews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson impresses.

His is one of the works in which blank verse seems properly used. Thomson's wide expansion of general views, and his enumeration of circumstantial varieties, would have been obstructed and embarrassed by the frequent intersection of the sense, which are the necessary effects of rhyme.

His descriptions of extended scenes and general effects bring before us the whole magnificence of nature, whether pleasing or dreadful. The gaiety of Spring, the splendor of Summer, the tranquillity of Autumn, and the horror of Winter, take in their turns possession of the mind. The poet leads us

through the appearances of things, as they are successively varied by the vicissitudes of the year, and imparts to us so much of his own enthusiasm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery, and kindle with his sentiments. Nor is the naturalist without his part in the entertainment; for he is assisted to recollect and to combine; to arrange his discoveries, and to amplify the sphere of his contemplation.

His diction is in the highest degree florid and luxuriant, such as may be said to be to his images and thoughts 'both their lustre and their shade;' such as invest them with splendor, through which perhaps they are not always discerned. It is too exuberant, and sometimes may be charged with filling the ear more than the mind.

The highest praise which he has received ought not to be suppressed: it is said by Lord Lyttelton, in the prologue to his posthumous play, that his works contained

'No line which, dying, he could wish to blot.'

AN ESSAY

ON THE

PLAN AND CHARACTER

OF

THOMSON's SEASONS.

WHEN a work of art, to masterly execution, adds novelty of design, it demands not only a cursory admiration, but such a mature inquiry into the principles upon which it has been formed, as may determine how far it deserves to be received as a model for future attempts in the same walk. Originals are always rare productions. The performances of artists in general, even of those who stand high in their respective classes, are only imitations, which have more or less merit, in proportion to the degree of skill and jugdment with which they copy originals more or less excellent. A good original, therefore, forms an æra in the art itself; and the history of every art divides itself into periods comprehending the intervals between the appearance of different approved originals. Sometimes, indeed, various models of a very different cast may exercise the talents of imitators during a single period; and this will more frequently be the case, as arts become more generally

known and studied; difference of taste being always the result of liberal and varied pursuit.

How strongly these periods are marked in the history of poetry, both ancient and modern, a cursory view will suffice to shew. The scarcity of originals here is universally acknowledged and lamented, and the present race of poets are thought particularly chargeable with this defect. It ought, however, to be allowed in their favour, that if genius has declined, taste has improved; and that if they imitate more, they choose better models to copy after.

That Thomson's Seasons is the original whence our modern descriptive poets have derived that more elegant and correct style of painting natural objects which distinguishes them from their immediate predecessors, will, I think, appear evident to one who examines their several casts and manners. That none of them, however, have yet equalled their master; and that his performance is an exquisite piece, replete with beauties of the most engaging and delightful kind, will be sensibly felt by all of congenial taste — and perhaps no poem was ever composed which addressed itself to the feelings of a greater number of readers. It is, therefore, on every account an object well worthy the attention of criticism; and an inquiry into the peculiar nature of its plan and the manner of its execution may be an agreeable introduction to a re-perusal of it in the elegant edition now offered to the public.

The description of such natural objects as by their beauty, grandeur, or novelty agreeably impress

the imagination, has at all times been a principal and favourite occupation of poetry. Various have been the methods in which such descriptions have been introduced. They have been made subservient to the purposes of ornament and illustration, in the more elevated and abstracted kinds of poetry, by being used as objects of similitude. They have constituted a pleasing and necessary part of epic narration when employed in forming a scenery suitable to the events. The simple tale of pastoral life could scarcely without their aid be rendered in any degree interesting. The precepts of an art, and the systems of philosophers, depend upon the adventitious ornaments afforded by them for almost every thing which can render them fit subjects for poetry.

Thus intermixed as they are with almost all, and essential to some species of poetry, it was, however, thought that they could not legitimately constitute the whole, or even the principal part, of a capital piece. Something of a more solid nature was required as the ground-work of a poetical fabric; *pure description* was opposed to *sense;* and binding together the wild flowers which grew obvious to common sight and touch was deemed a trifling and unprofitable amusement.

Such was the state of critical opinion, when Thomson published, in succession, but not in their present order[1], the pieces which compose his *Seasons;*

[1] They appeared in the following order; *Winter, Summer, Spring, Autumn.*

the first capital work in which natural description was professedly the principal object. To paint the face of nature as changing through the changing seasons; to mark the approaches, and trace the progress of these vicissitudes, in a series of landskips all formed upon images of grandeur or beauty; and to give animation and variety to the whole by interspersing manners and incidents suitable to the scenery; appears to be the general design of this poem. Essentially different from a didactic piece, its *business* is to describe, and the occupation of its *leisure* to teach. And as in the *Georgics*, whenever the poet has, for a while, borne away by the warmth of fancy, wandered through the flowery wilds of description, he suddenly checks himself, and returns to the toils of the husbandman; so Thomson, in the midst of his delightful lessons of morality, and affecting relations, recurs to a view of that state of the season which introduced the digression.

It is an attention to this leading idea, that in this piece there is a progressive series of descriptions, all tending to a certain point, and all parts of a general plan, which alone can enable us to range through the vast variety and quick succession of objects presented in it, with any clear conception of the writer's method, or true judgment concerning what may be regarded as forwarding his main purpose, or as merely ornamental deviation. The particular elucidation of this point will constitute the principal part of the present Essay.

Although each of the *Seasons* appears to have been intended as a complete piece, and contains

within itself the natural order of beginning, middle, and termination, yet, as they were at length collected and modelled by their author, they have all a mutual relation to each other, and concur in forming a more comprehensive whole. The annual space in which the earth performs its revolution round the sun, is so strongly marked by nature for a perfect period, that all mankind have agreed in forming their computations of time upon it. In all the temperate climates of the globe, the four seasons are so many progressive stages in this circuit, which, like the acts in a well-constructed drama, gradually disclose, ripen, and bring to an end the various business transacted on the great theatre of nature. The striking analogy which this period with its several divisions bears to the course of human existence, has been remarked and pursued by writers of all ages and countries. Spring has been represented as the youth of the year—the season of pleasing hope, lively energy, and rapid increase. Summer has been resembled to perfect manhood—the season of steady warmth, confirmed strength, and unremitting vigour. Autumn, which, while it bestows the rich products of full maturity, is yet ever hastening to decline, has been aptly compared to that period, when the man, mellowed by age, yields the most valuable fruits of experience and wisdom, but daily exhibits increasing symptoms of decay. The cold, cheerless, and sluggish Winter has almost without a metaphor been termed the decrepid and hoary old age of the year, pursued through its changing seasons, is that of an individual,

whose existence is marked by a progressive course from its origin to its termination. It is thus represented by our Poet; this idea preserves an unity and connection through his whole work; and the accurate observer will remark a beautiful chain of circumstances in his description, by which the birth, vigour, decline, and extinction of the vital principle of the year are pictured in the most lively manner.

This order and gradation of the whole runs, as has been already hinted, through each division of the poem. Every season has its incipient, confirmed, and receding state, of which its historian ought to give distinct views, arranged according to the succession in which they appear. Each, too, like the prismatic colours, is indistinguishably blended in its origin and termination with that which precedes, and which follows it; and it may be expected from the pencil of an artist to hit off these mingled shades so as to produce a pleasing and picturesque effect. Our Poet has not been inattentive to these circumstances in the conduct of his plan. His *Spring* begins with a view of the season as yet unconfirmed, and partaking of the roughness of Winter [1]; and it is not till after several steps in gradual progression, that it breaks forth in all its ornaments, as the favourite of Love and Pleasure. His *Autumn*, after a rich prospect of its bounties

[1] A descriptive piece, in which this very interval of time is represented, with all the accuracy of a naturalist, and vivid colouring of a poet, has lately appeared in a poem of Mr. Warton's, entitled *The first of April*.

and splendors, gently fades into "the sere, the yellow leaf," and with the lengthened night, the clouded sun, and the rising storm, sink into the arms of Winter. It is remarkable, that in order to produce something of a similar effect in his *Summer*, a season which, on account of its uniformity of character, does not admit of any strongly-marked gradations, he has comprized the whole of his description within the limits of a single day, pursuing the course of the sun from its rising to its setting. A Summer's day is, in reality, a just model of the entire season. Its beginning is moist and temperate; its middle, sultry and parching; its close, soft and refreshing. By thus exhibiting all the vicissitudes of Summer under one point of view, they are rendered much more striking than could have been done in a series of feebly contrasted and scarcely distinguishable periods.

Wiih this idea of the general plan of the whole work, and of its several parts, we proceed to take a view of the various subjects composing the descriptive series of which it principally consists.

Every grand and beautiful appearance in Nature, that distinguishes one portion of the annual circuit from another, is a proper source of materials for the *Poet of the Seasons*. Of these, some are obvious to the common observer, and require only justness and elegance of taste for the selection: others discover themselves only to the mind opened and enlarged by science and philosophy. All the knowledge we acquire concerning natural objects by such a train of observation and reasoning as

merits the appellation of science, is comprehended under the two divisions of *natural philosophy* and *natural history*. Both of these may be employed to advantage in descriptive poetry: for although it be true, that poetical composition, being rather calculated for amusement than instruction, and addressing itself to the many who feel, rather than to the few who reason, is improperly occupied about the abstruse and argumentative parts of a science; yet, to reject those grand and beautiful ideas which philosophical view of Nature offers to the mind, merely because they are above the comprehension of vulgar readers, is surely an unnecessary degradation of this noble art. Still more narrow and unreasonable is that critical precept, which, in conformity to the received notion that fiction is the soul of poetry, obliges the poet to adopt ancient errors in preference to modern truths; and this even where truth has the advantage in point of poetical effect. In fact, modern philosophy is as much superior to the ancient in sublimity as in solidity; and the most vivid imagination cannot paint to itself scenes of grandeur equal to those which cool science and demonstration offer to the enlightened mind. Objects so vast and magnificent as planets rolling with even pace through their orbits, comets rushing along their devious track, light springing from its unexhausted source, mighty rivers formed in their subterranean beds, do not require, or even admit, a heightening from the fancy. The most faithful pencil here produces the noblest pictures; and Thomson, by

strictly adhering to the character of the *poet of Nature*, has treated all these topics with a true sublimity, which a writer of less knowledge and accuracy could never have attained. The strict propriety with which subjects from Astronomy and the other parts of Natural Philosophy are introduced into a poem describing the changes of the Seasons, need not be insisted on, since it is obvious that the primary cause of all these changes is to be sought in principles derived from these sciences. They are the ground-work of the whole; and establish that connected series of cause and effect, upon which all those appearances in Nature depend, from whence the descriptive poet draws his materials.

Natural History, in its most extensive signification, includes every observation relative to the distinctions, resemblances, and changes of all the bodies, both animate and inanimate, which Nature offers to us. These observations, however, deserve to be considered as part of a science only when they refer to some general truth, and form a link of that vast chain which connects all created being in one grand system. It was my attempt, in an Essay lately published [1], to shew how necessary a more accurate and scientific survey of natural objects than has usually been taken, was to the avoiding the common defects, and attaining the highest beauties of descriptive poetry; and some of the most striking examples of excellence arising

[1] Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry.

from this source were extracted from the poem now before us. It will be unnecessary here to recapitulate the substance of these remarks, or to mark out singly the several passages of our author which display his talents for description to the greatest advantage. Our present design rather requires such a general view of the materials he has collected, and the method in which he has arranged them, as may shew in what degree they forward and coincide with the plan of his work.

The correspondence between certain changes in the animal and vegetable tribes, and those revolutions of the heavenly bodies which produce the vicissitudes of the Seasons, is the foundation of an alliance between Astronomy and Natural History, that equally demands attention as a matter of curious speculation, and of practical utility. The astronomical calendar, filled up by the naturalist, is a combination of science, at the same time pregnant with important instruction to the husbandman, and fertile in grand and pleasing objects to the poet and philosopher. Thomson seems constantly to have kept in view a combination of this kind; and to have formed from it such an idea of the *æconomy of Nature*, as enabled him to preserve a regularity of method and uniformity of design through all the variety of his descriptions. We shall attempt to draw out a kind of historical narrative of his progress through the Seasons, as far as this order is observable.

Spring is characterized as the season of the renovation of Nature; in which animals and

vegetables, excited by the kindly influence of returning warmth, shake off the torpid inaction of Winter, and prepare for the continuance and increase of their several species. The vegetable tribes, as more independent and self-provided, lead the way in this progress. The poet, accordingly, begins with representing the reviviscent plants emerging, as soon as genial showers have softened the ground, in numbers "beyond the power of botanist to reckon up their tribes." The opening blossoms and flowers soon call forth from their winter retreats those industrious insects which derive sustenance from their nectareous juices. As the beams of the sun become more potent, the larger vegetables, shrubs and trees, unfold their leaves; and as soon as a friendly concealment is by their means provided for the various nations of the feathered race, they joyfully begin the course of laborious, but pleasing occupations, which are to engage them during the whole season. The delightful series of pictures, so truly expressive of that genial spirit that pervades the Spring, which Thomson has formed on the variety of circumstances attending the *passion of the groves*, cannot escape the notice and admiration of the most negligent eye. Affected by the same soft influence, and equally indebted to the renewed vegetable tribes for food and shelter, the several kinds of quadrupeds are represented as concurring in the celebration of this charming Season with conjugal and parental rites. Even Man himself, though from his social condition less under the

dominion of physical necessities, is properly described as partaking of the general ardour. Such is the order and connection of this whole book, that it might well pass for a commentary upon a most beautiful passage in the philosophical poet Lucretius; who certainly wanted nothing but a better system and more circumscribed subject, to have appeared as one of the greatest masters of description in either ancient or modern poetry. Reasoning on the unperishable Nature, and perpetual circulation, of the particles of matter, he deduces all the delightful appearances of Spring from the seeds of fertility which descend in the vernal showers.

——— *Pereunt imbres, ubi eos pater Æther*
In gremium matris Terraï præcipitavit.
At nitidæ surgunt fruges, ramique virescunt
Arboribus; crescunt ipsæ, fætuque gravantur;
Hinc alitur porrò nostrum genus atque ferarum:
Hinc lætas urbeis pueris florere videmus,
Frundiferasque novis avibus canere undique sylvas.
Hinc fessæ pecudes pingues per pabula læta
Corpora deponunt, et candens lacteus humor
Uberibus manat distentis; hinc nova proles
Artubus infirmis teneras lasciva per herbas
Ludit, lacte mero mentеis percussa novellas.

Lib. I, 251, &c.

The rains are lost, when Jove descends in showers
Soft on the bosom of the parent Earth:
But springs the shining, grain; their verdant robe
The trees resume; they grow, and pregnant bend
Beneath their fertile load: hence kindly food
The living tribe receive; then cheerful town

Beholds its joyous bands of flowering youth;
With new-born songs the leafy groves resound;
The full-fed flocks amid the laughing meads
Their weary bodies lay, while wide-distent
The plenteous udder teems with milky juice;
And o'er the grass, as their young hearts beat high,
Swell'd by the pure and generous streams they drain,
Frolic the wanton lambs with joints infirm.

The period of Summer is marked by fewer and less striking changes in the face of Nature. A soft and pleasing languor, interrupted only by the gradual progression of the vegetable and animal tribes towards their state of maturity, forms the leading character of this season. The active fermentation of the juices, which the first access of genial warmth had excited, now subsides; and the increasing heats rather inspire faintness and inaction than lively exertions. The insect-race alone seem animated with peculiar vigour under the more direct influence of the sun, and are therefore with equal truth and advantage introduced by the Poet to enliven the silent and drooping scenes presented by the other forms of animal Nature. As this source, however, together with whatever else our summers afford, is insufficient to furnish novelty and business enough for this act of the drama of the year, the Poet judiciously opens a new field, profusely fertile in objects suited to the glowing colours of descriptive poetry. By an easy and natural transition, he quits the chastized summer of our temperate clime for those regions where a perpetual summer reigns, exalted by such

superior degrees of solar heat as give an entirely new face to almost every part of Nature. The terrific grandeur prevalent in some of these, the exquisite richness and beauty in others, and the novelty in all, afford such a happy variety for the poet's selection, that we need not wonder if some of his noblest pieces are the product of this delightful excursion. He returns, however, with apparent satisfaction to take a last survey of the softer summer of our island; and after closing the prospect of terrestrial beauties, artfully shifts the scene to celestial splendors, which, though perhaps not more striking in this season than in some of the others, are now alone agreeable objects of contemplation in a northern climate.

Autumn is too eventful a period in the history of the year within the temperate parts of the globe, to require foreign aid for rendering it more varied and interesting. The promise of the Spring is now fulfilled; the silent and gradual process of maturation is completed; and Human Industry beholds with triumph the rich products of its toil. The vegetable tribes disclose their infinitely various forms of *fruit;* which term, while, with respect to common use, it is confined to a few peculiar modes of fructification, in the more comprehensive language of the naturalist includes every product of vegetation by which the rudiments of a future progeny are developed, and separated from the parent plant. These are in part collected and stored up by those animals for whose sustenance during the ensuing sleep of Nature they are provided. The rest, fur-

nished with various contrivances for dissemination, are scattered, by the friendly winds which now begin to blow, over the surface of that earth which they are to clothe and decorate. The young of the animal race, which Spring and Summer had brought forth and cherished, having now acquired sufficient vigour, quit their concealments, and offer themselves to the pursuit of the carnivorous among their fellow-animals, and of the great destroyer Man. Thus the scenery is enlivened with the various sports of the hunter; which, however repugnant they may appear to that system of general benevolence and sympathy which philosophy would inculcate, have ever afforded a most agreeable exertion to the human powers, and have much to plead in their favour as a necessary part of the great plan of Nature. Indeed, she marks her intention with sufficient precision, by refusing to grant any longer those friendly shades which had grown for the protection of the infant offspring. The grove loses its honors; but, before they are entirely tarnished, an adventitious beauty, arising from that gradual decay which loosens the withering leaf, gilds the autumnal landskip with a temporary splendor, superior to the verdure of Spring, or the luxuriance of Summer. The infinitely various and ever-changing hues of the leaves at this season, melting into every soft gradation of tint and shade, have long engaged the imitation of the painter, and are equally happy ornaments in the description of the Poet.

These unvarying symptons of approaching Winter now warn several of the winged tribes to prepare

for their aerial voyage to those happy climates of perpetual summer, where no deficiency of food or shelter can ever distress them; and about the same time, other fowls of hardier constitution, which are contented with escaping the iron winters of the arctic regions, arrive to supply the vacancy. Thus the striking scenes afforded by that wonderful part of the œconomy of Nature, the migration of birds, present themselves at this season to the Poet. The thickening fogs, the heavy rains, the swoln rivers, while they deform this sinking period of the year, add new subjects to the pleasing variety which reigns throughout its whole course, and which justifies the Poet's character of it, as the season when the Muse "best exerts her voice."

Winter, directly opposite as it is in other respects to Summer, yet resembles it in this, that it is a season in which Nature is employed rather in secretly preparing for the mighty changes which it successively brings to light, than in the actual exhibition of them. It is therefore a period equally barren of events; and has still less of animation than Summer, inasmuch as lethargic insensibility is a state more distant from vital energy than the languor of indolent repose. From the fall of the leaf, and withering of the herb, an unvarying death-like torpor oppresses almost the whole vegetable creation, and a considerable part of the animal, during this entire portion of the year. The whole insect-race, which filled every part of the summer landskip with life and motion, are now either buried in profound sleep, or actually no longer exist, except in the unformed

rudiments of a future progeny. Many of the birds and quadrupeds are retired to concealments, from which not even the calls of hunger can force them; and the rest, intent only on the preservation of a joyless being, have ceased to exert those powers of pleasing, which, at other seasons, so much contribute to their mutual happiness, as well as to the amusement of their human sovereign. Their social connections, however, are improved by their wants. In order the better to procure their scanty subsistence, and resist the inclemencies of the sky, they are taught by instinct to assemble in flocks; and this provision has the secondary effect of gratifying the spectator with something of novelty and action, even in the dreariness of a wintry prospect.

But it is in the extraordinary changes and agitations which the elements, and the surrounding atmosphere undergo during this season, that the Poet of Nature must principally look for relief from the gloomy uniformity reigning through other parts of the creation. Here scenes are presented to his view, which, were they less frequent, must strike with wonder and admiration the most incurious spectator. The effects of cold are more sudden, and in many instances more extraordinary and unexpected than those of heat. He who has beheld the vegetable productions of even a northern summer, will not be greatly amazed at the richer and more luxuriant, but still resembling, growths of the tropics. But one who has always been accustomed to view water in a liquid and colourless state, cannot form

the least conception of the same element as hardened into an extensive plain of solid crystal, or covering the ground with a robe of the purest white. The highest possible degree of astonishment must therefore attend the first view of these phenomena; and as in our temperate climate but a small portion of the year affords these spectacles, we find that, even here, they have novelty enough to excite emotions of agreeable surprise. But it is not to novelty alone that they owe their charms. Their intrinsic beauty is, perhaps, individually superiour to that of the gayest objects presented by the other seasons. Where is the elegance and brilliancy that can compare with that which decorates every tree or bush on the clear morning succeeding a night of hoar frost! or what is the lustre that would not appear dull and tarnished in competition with a field of snow just glazed over with frost! By the vivid description of such objects as these, contrasted with the savage sublimity of storms and tempests, our Poet has been able to produce a set of winter landskips, as engaging to the fancy as the apparently happier scenes of genial warmth and verdure.

But he has not trusted entirely to these resources for combating the natural sterility of winter. Repeating the pleasing artifice of his *Summer*, he has called in foreign aid, and has heightened the scenery with grandeur and horror not our own. The famished troops of wolves pouring from the Alps; the mountains of snow rolling down the precipices of the same regions; the dreary plains

over which the Laplander urges his rein deer; the wonders of the icy sea, and volcanos "flaming thro' a waste of snow" are objects judiciously selected from all that Nature presents most singular and striking in the various domains of boreal cold and wintry desolation.

Thus have we attempted to give a general view of those materials which constitute the groundwork of a poem on the Seasons, which are essential to its very nature; and on the proper arrangement of which its regularity and connection depend. The extent of knowledge, as well as the powers of description, which Thomson has exhibited in this part of his work, is, on the whole, truly admirable; and though, with the present advanced taste for accurate observation in natural history, some improvements might be suggested, yet he certainly remains unrivalled in the list of descriptive poets.

But the rural landskip is not solely made up of land, and water, and trees, and birds, and beasts; *man* is a distinguished figure in it; his multiplied occupations and concerns introduce themselves into every part of it; he intermixes even in the wildest and rudest scenes, and throws a life and interest upon every surrounding object. *Manners* and *character* therefore constitute a part even of a descriptive poem; and in a plan so extensive as the history of the year, they must enter under various forms, and upon numerous occasions.

The most obvious and appropriated use of human figures in pictures of the Seasons, is the

introduction of them to assist in marking out the succession of annual changes by their various labours and amusements. In common with other animals, man is directed in the diversified employment of earning a toilsome subsistence by an attention to the vicissitudes of the seasons; and all his diversions in the simple state of rustic society are also regulated by the same circumstance. Thus a series of moving figures enlivens the landskip, and contributes to stamp on each scene its peculiar character. The shepherd, the husbandman, the hunter, appear in their turns, and may be considered as natural concomitants of that portion of the yearly round which prompts their several occupations.

But it is not only the bodily pursuits of man which are affected by these changes; the sensations and affections of his mind are almost equally under their influence; and the result of the whole, as forming the enamoured votary of Nature to a peculiar cast of character and manners, is not less conspicuous. Thus the Poet of the Seasons is at liberty, without deviating from his plan, to descant on the varieties of moral constitution, and the powers which external causes are found to possess over the temper of the soul. He may draw pictures of the pastoral life in all its genuine simplicity; and, assuming the tone of a moral instructor, may contrast the peace and felicity of innocent retirement, with the turbulent agitations of ambition and avarice.

The various incidents too, upon which the

simple tale of rural events is founded, are very much modelled by the difference of seasons. The catastrophes of Winter differ from those of Summer; the sports of Spring from those of Autumn. Thus, little history-pieces and adventures, whether pathetic or amusing, will suggest themselves to the Poet; which, when properly adapted to the scenery and circumstances, may very happily coincide with the main design of the composition.

The bare enumeration of these several occasions of introducing draughts of human life and manners, will be sufficient to call to mind the admirable use which Thomson throughout his whole poem has made of them. He, in fact, never appears more truly inspired with his subject, than when giving birth to those sentiments of tenderness and beneficence, which seem to have occupied his whole heart. An universal benevolence, extending to every part of the animal creation, manifests itself in almost every scene he draws; and the rural character, as delineated in his feelings, contains all the softness, purity, and simplicity that are feigned of the golden age. Yet, excellent as the moral and sentimental part of his work must appear to every congenial mind, it is, perhaps, that in which he may the most easily be rivalled. A refined and feeling heart may derive from its own proper sources a store of corresponding sentiment, which will naturally clothe itself in the form of expression best suited to the occasion. Nor does the invention of those simple incidents which are most adapted to excite the simpathetic emotions,

require any stretch of fancy. The nearer they approach to common life, the more certainly will they produce their effect. Wonder and surprise are affections of so different a kind, and so distract the attention, that they never fail to diminish the force of the pathetic. On these accounts, writers much inferior in respect to the powers of description and imagery, have equalled our Poet in elegant and benevolent sentiment, and perhaps excelled him in interesting narration. Of these, it will be sufficient to mention the ingenious author of a French poem on the Seasons, who, though a mere copyist in the descriptive parts, has made many pleasing additions to the manners and incidents proper for such a composition.

But there is a strain of sentiment of a higher and more digressive nature, with which Thomson has occupied a considerable portion of his poem. The fundamental principles of Moral Philosophy, ideas concerning the origin and progress of government and civilization, historical sketches, and reviews of the characters most famous in ancient and modern history, are interspersed through the various parts of the Seasons. The manly, liberal, and enlightened spirit which this writer breathes in all his works, must ever endear him to the friends of truth and virtue; and in particular, his genuine patriotism and zeal in the cause of liberty will render his writings always estimable to the British reader. But, just and important as his thoughts on these topics may be, there may remain a doubt in the breast of the critic, whether their introduction

in a piece like this do not, in some instances, break in upon that unity of character which every work of art should support. We have seen, from the general plan and tenor of the poem, that it is professedly of the rural cast. The objects, it is chiefly conversant with, are those presented by the hand of Nature, not the products of human art; and when man himself is introduced as a part of the group, it would seem that, in conformity to the rest, he ought to be represented in such a state only, as the simplest forms of society, and most unconstrained situations in it, exhibit. Courts and cities, camps and senates, do not well accord with sylvan scenery. From the principle of congruity, therefore, a critic might be induced to reject some of these digressive ornaments, though intrinsically beautiful, and doubtless contributing to the elevation and variety of the piece. His judgment in this respect would be a good deal influenced by the manner of their introduction. In some instances this is so easy and natural, that the mind is scarcely sensible of the deviation; in others it is more abrupt and unartful. As examples of both, we may refer to the passages in which various characters from English, and from Grecian and Roman history, are displayed. The former, by a happy gradation, is introduced at the close of a delightful piece, containing the praises of Britain, which is itself a kind of digression, though a very apt and seasonable one. The latter has no other connection with the part at which it is inserted, than the very forced and distant one, that, as reading may be reckoned

among the amusements appropriated to Winter, such subjects as these will naturally offer themselves to the studious mind.

There is another source of sentiment to the Poet of the Seasons, which, while it is superior to the last in real elevation, is also strictly connected with the nature of his work. The genuine philosopher, while he surveys the grand and beautiful objects every where surrounding him, will be prompted to lift his eye to the great Cause of all these wonders; the planner and architect of this mighty fabric; every minute part of which so much awakens his curiosity and admiration. The laws by which this Being acts, the ends which he seems to have pursued, must excite his humble researches; and in proportion as he discovers infinite power in the means, directed by infinite goodness in the intention, his soul must be wrapt in astonishment, and expanded with gratitude. The *œconomy of Nature* will, to such an observer, be the perfect scheme of an all-wise and beneficent mind; and every part of the wide creation will appear to proclaim the praise of his great Author. Thus a new connection will manifest itself between the several parts of the universe; and a new order and design will be traced through the progress of its various revolutions.

Thomson's Seasons is as eminently a religious, as it is a descriptive poem. Thoroughly impressed with sentiments of veneration for the Author of that assemblage of order and beauty which it was his province to paint, he takes every proper occasion to excite similar emotions in the breast of his

readers. Entirely free from the gloom of superstition and the narrowness of bigotry, he every where represents the Deity as the kind and beneficent parent of all his works, always watchful over their best interests, and from seeming evil still educing the greatest possible good to all his creatures. In every appearance of Nature he beholds the operation of a divine hand; and regards, according to his own emphatical phrase, each change throughout the revolving year but as the "varied God." This spirit, which breaks forth at intervals in each division of his poem, shines full and concentred in that noble *hymn* which crowns the work. This piece, the sublimest production of its kind since the days of Milton, should be considered as the winding up of all the variety of matter and design contained in the preceding parts; and thus is not only admirable as a separate composition, but is contrived with masterly skill to strengthen the unity and connection of the great whole.

Thus is planned and constructed a poem, which, founded as it is upon the unfading beauties of Nature, will live as long as the language in which it is written shall be read. If the perusal of it be in any respect rendered more interesting or instructive by this imperfect Essay, the purpose of the writer will be fully answered.

SPRING.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed — Inscribed to the Countess of Hartford — The Season is described as it affects the various parts of Nature, ascending from the lower to the higher, with digressions arising from the subject— Its influence on inanimate Matter, on Vegetables, on brute Animals, and last on Man; concluding with a dissuasive from the wild and irregular passion of Love, opposed to that of a pure and happy kind.

COME, gentle Spring, ethereal Mildness, come,
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veil'd in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend!
O Hartford, fitted, or to shine in courts
With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
With innocence and meditation join'd
In soft assemblage, listen to my song,
Which thy own Season paints! when Nature all
Is blooming, and benevolent like thee.
And see where surly Winter passes off
Far to the north and calls his ruffian blasts:
His blasts obey and quit the howling hill,
The shatter'd forest, and the ravag'd vale;
While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch,
Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,

The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.
As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day delightless; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time, with bill ingulpht,
To shake the sounding marsh; or from the shore
The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.
At last form *Aries* rolls the bounteous sun,
And the bright *Bull* receives him. Then no more
Th' expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold;
But, full of life and vivifying soul,
Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin,
Fleecy, and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven.
Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,
Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
Joyous, th' impatient husbandman perceives
Relenting nature, and his lusty steers
Drives from their stalls, to where the well-us'd plough
Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.
There, unrefusing to the harness'd yoke,
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
Chear'd by the simple song and soaring lark.
Meanwhile, incumbent o'er the shining share,
The master leans, removes th' obstructing clay,
Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.
White, thro' the neighbouring fields the sower stalks
With measur'd step, and liberal throws the grain
Into the faithful bosom of the ground.
The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene.

Be gracious, *Heaven!* For now laborious man
Has done his part. Ye fostering breezes, blow!
Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, descend!
And temper all, thou world-reviving sun,
Into the perfect year! Nor ye, who live
In luxury and ease, in pomp and pride,
Think these lost scenes unworthy of your ear:
Such themes as these the *rural* Maro sung
To wide-imperial *Rome,* in the full height
Of elegance and taste, by *Greece* refin'd.
In ancient times, the sacred plough employ'd
The kings and awful fathers of mankind:
And some, with whom compar'd, your insect-tribes
Are but the beings of a summer's day,
Have held the scale of empire, rul'd the storm
Of mighty war; then, with unwearied hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seiz'd
The plough, and greatly independent liv'd.
Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough!
And o'er your hills, and long withdrawing vales,
Let Autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
Luxuriant, and unbounded! As the sea,
Far thro' his azure turbulent domain,
Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports;
So with superior boon may your rich soil,
Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
And be th' exhaustless granary of a world!
Nor only thro' the lenient air this change,
Delicious, breathes; the penetrative sun,
His force deep-darting to the dark retreat

Of vegetation, sets the steaming *Power*
At large, to wander o'er the verdant earth,
In various hues; but chiefly thee, gay *Green!*
Thou smiling nature's universal robe!
United light and shade! where the sight dwells
With growing strength, and ever-new delight.
From the moist meadow to the wither'd hill,
Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,
And swells, and deepens, to the cherish'd eye.
The hawthorn whitens; and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd
In full luxuriance, to the sighing gales,
Where the deer rustle thro' the twining brake,
And the birds sing conceal'd. At once, array'd
In all the colours of the flushing year,
By nature's swift and secret-working hand,
The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
With lavish fragrance; while the promis'd fruit
Lies yet a little embryo, unperceiv'd,
Within its crimson folds. Now from the town
Bury'd in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damps,
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
From the bent bush, as thro' the verdant maze
Of sweet-briar hedges I pursue my walk:
Or taste the smell of dairy; or ascend
Some eminence, Augusta, in thy plains,
And see the country, far-diffus'd around,
One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower
Of mingled blossoms; where the raptur'd eye

Hurries from joy to joy, and, hid beneath
The fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies.
If, brush'd from *Russian* wilds, a cutting gale
Rise not, and scatter from his humid wings
The clammy mildew; or, dry-blowing, breathe
Untimely frost; before whose baleful blast
The full-blown Spring thro' all her foliage shrinks,
Joyless and dead, a wide-dejected waste:
For oft, engender'd by the hazy North,
Myriads on myriads, insect armies warp
Keen in the poison'd breeze, and wasteful eat,
Thro' buds and bark, into the blacken'd core,
Their eager way—a feeble race! yet oft
The sacred sons of vengeance, on whose course
Corrosive famine waits, and kills the year.
To check this plague the skilful farmer chaff,
And blazing straw, before his orchard burns;
Till, all involv'd in smoke, the latent foe
From every cranny suffocated falls:
Or scatters o'er the blooms the pungent dust
Of pepper, fatal to the frosty tribe:
Or, when th' envenom'd leaf begins to curl,
With sprinkled water drowns them in their nest:
Nor, while they pick them up with busy bill,
The little trooping birds unwisely scares.
Be patient, swains; these cruel-seeming winds
Blow not in vain. Far hence they keep, repress'd,
Those deep'ning clouds on clouds, surcharg'd with rain,
That o'er the vast *Atlantic* hither borne,
In endless train, would quench the summer blaze,
And, chearless, drown the crude unripen'd year.

The north-east spends his rage; he now, shut up
Within his iron caves, th' effusive south
Warms the wide air, and o'er the void of heaven
Breathes the big clouds with vernal show'rs distent.
At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise,
Scarce staining ether; but, by swift degrees,
In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapour sails
Along the loaded sky, and mingling deep
Sits on th' horizon round a settled gloom:
Not such as wintry-storms on mortals shed,
Oppressing life; but lovely, gentle, kind,
And full of every hope and every joy,
The wish of nature. Gradual, sinks the breeze
Into a perfect calm, that not a breath
Is heard to quiver thro' the closing woods,
Or rustling turn the many-twinkling-leaves
Of aspin tall. Th' uncurling floods, diffus'd
In glassy breadth, seem thro' delusive lapse
Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all,
And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
Drop the dry sprig, and mute-imploring eye
The falling verdure. Hush'd in short suspense,
The plumy people streak their wings with oil
To throw the lucid moisture trickling off,
And wait th' approaching sign to strike at once
Into the general choir. Ev'n mountains, vales,
And forests seem, impatient, to demand
The promis'd sweetness. Man superior walks
Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
And looking lively gratitude. At last,
The clouds consign their treasures to the fields;
And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool

Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,
In large effusion, o'er the freshen'd world.
The stealing show'r is scarce to patter heard
By such as wander thro' the forest-walks,
Beneath th' umbrageous multitude of leaves.
But who can hold the shade, while heaven descends
In universal bounty, shedding herbs,
And fruits and flow'rs on nature's ample lap!
Swift fancy fir'd anticipates their growth;
And, while the milky nutriment distills,
Beholds the kindling country colour round.

Thus all day long the full-distended clouds
Indulge their genial stores, and well-showr'd earth
Is deep enrich'd with vegetable life;
Till, in the western sky, the downward sun
Looks out, effulgent, from amid the flush
Of broken clouds, gay-shifting to his beam.
The rapid radiance instantaneous strikes
Th' illumin'd mountain, thro' the forest streams,
Shakes on the floods, and in a yellow mist,
Far smoking o'er th' interminable plain,
In twinkling myriads lights the dewy gems.
Moist, bright, and green, the landskip laughs around.
Full swell the woods; their very music wakes,
Mix'd in wild concert with the warbling brooks
Increas'd, the distant bleatings of the hills,
And hollow lows responsive from the vales,
Whence blending all the sweeten'd zephyr springs.
Meantime refracted from yon eastern cloud,
Bestriding earth, the grand ethereal bow
Shoots up immense; and every hue unfolds,
In fair proportion running from the red,

To where the violet fades into the sky.
Here, awful Newton! the dissolving clouds
Form, fronting on the sun, thy show'ry prism;
And to the sage-instructed eye unfold
The various twine of light by thee disclos'd
From the white mingling maze. Not so the boy:
He wond'ring views the bright enchantment bend,
Delightful, o'er the radiant fields, and runs
To catch the falling glory; but amaz'd
Beholds th' amusive arch before him fly,
Then vanish quite away. Still night succeeds,
A softened shade, and saturated earth
Awaits the morning-beam to give to light,
Rais'd thro' ten thousand different plastic tubes,
The balmy treasures of the former day.
Then spring the living herbs, profusely wild,
O'er all the deep green earth, beyond the power
Of botanist to number up their tribes:
Whether he steals along the lonely dale,
In silent search; or thro' the forest, rank
With what the dull incurious weeds account,
Bursts his blind way; or climbs the mountain-rock,
Fir'd by the nodding verdure of its brow.
With such a liberal hand has nature flung
Their seeds abroad, blown them about in winds,
Innumerous mix'd them with the nursing mold,
The moistening current, and prolific rain.
But who their virtues can declare? Who pierce
With vision pure, into these secret stores
Of health, and life, and joy! The food of man,
While yet he liv'd in innocence, and told
A length of golden years; unflesh'd in blood,

A stranger to the savage arts of life;
Death, rapine, carnage, surfeit, and disease;
The Lord, and not the tyrant, of the world!
The first fresh dawn then wak'd the gladden'd race
Of uncorrupted man, nor blush'd to see
The sluggard sleep beneath its sacred beam:
For their light slumbers gently fum'd away;
And up they rose as vigorous as the sun,
Or to the culture of the willing glebe,
Or to the chearful tendance of the flock.
Meantime the song went round; and dance and sport,
Wisdom and friendly talk, successive, stole
Their hours away: while in the rosy vale
Love breath'd his infant sighs, from anguish free,
And full replete with bliss; save the sweet pain,
That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.
Nor yet injurious act, nor surly deed,
Was known among those happy sons of Heaven;
For reason and benevolence were law.
Harmonious Nature too look'd smiling on.
Clear shone the skies, cool'd with eternal gales,
And balmy spirit all. The youthful sun
Shot his best rays, and still the gracious clouds
Dropt fatness down, as o'er the swelling mead
The herds and flocks, commixing, play'd secure.
This when, emergent from the gloomy wood,
The glaring lion saw, his horrid heart
Was meeken'd, and he join'd his sullen joy.
For music held the whole in perfect peace:
Soft sigh'd the flute; the tender voice was heard,
Warbling the varied heart; the woodlands round

Apply'd their quire; and winds and waters flow'd
In consonance. Such were those prime of days.
But now those white unblemish'd manners, whence
The fabling poets took their golden age,
Are found no more amid these iron times,
These dregs of life! Now the distemper'd mind
Has lost that concord of harmonious powers,
Which forms the soul of happiness; and all
Is off the poise within: the passions all
Have burst their bounds; and reason half extinct,
Or impotent, or else approving, sees
The foul disorder. Senseless and deform'd
Convulsive anger storms at large, or pale,
And silent, settles into fell revenge.
Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach.
Desponding fear, of feeble fancies full,
Weak and unmanly, loosens every power.
Even love itself is bitterness of soul,
A pensive anguish pining at the heart;
Or, sunk to sordid interest, feels no more
That noble wish, that never cloy'd-desire,
Which, selfish joy disdaining, seeks alone
To bless the dearer object of its flame.
Hope sickens with extravagance; and grief,
Of life impatient, into madness swells;
Or in dead silence wastes the weeping hours.
These, and a thousand mix'd emotions more,
From ever-changing views of good and ill,
Form'd infinitely various, vex the mind
With endless storms: whence, deeply rankling, grows

The partial thought, a listless unconcern,
Cold, and averting from our neigbour's good:
Then dark disgust, and hatred, winding wiles,
Coward deceit, and ruffian violence:
At last, extinct each social feeling, fell
And joyless inhumanity pervades
And petrifies the heart. Nature disturb'd
Is deem'd, vindictive, to have chang'd her course.
Hence in old dusky time, a deluge came:
When the deep-cleft disparting orb, that arch
The central waters round, impetuous rush'd,
With universal burst, into the gulph,
And o'er the high-pil'd hills of fractur'd earth
Wide dash'd the waves in undulation vast,
Till, from the center to the streaming clouds,
A shoreless ocean tumbled round the globe.
The Seasons since have, with severer sway,
Oppress'd a broken world: the Winter keen
Shook forth his waste of snows; and Summer shot
His pestilential heats. Great Spring, before,
Green'd all the year: and fruits and blossoms blush'd,
In social sweetness, on the self-same bough.
Pure was the temperate air; an even calm
Perpetual reign'd, save what the zephyrs bland
Breath'd o'er the blue expanse; for then nor storms
Were taught to blow, nor hurricanes to rage.
Sound slept the waters; no sulphureous glooms
Swell'd in the sky, and sent the lightening forth;
While sickly damps, and cold autumnal fogs,
Hung not, relaxing, on the springs of life.
But now, of turbid elements the sport,

From clear to cloudy tost, from hot to cold,
And dry to moist, with inward-eating change,
Our drooping days are dwindled down to nought,
Their period finish'd ere 'tis well begun.
And yet the wholesome herb neglected dies;
Though with the pure exhilarating soul
Of nutriment and health, and vital powers,
Beyond the search of art, 'tis copious blest.
For, with hot ravine fir'd, insanguin'd Man
Is now become the lion of the plain,
And worse. The wolf, who from the nightly fold
Fierce drags the bleating prey, ne'er drunk her milk,
Nor wore her warming fleece: nor has the steer,
At whose strong chest the deadly tiger hangs,
E'er plow'd for him. They too are temper'd high,
With hunger stung and wild necessity,
Nor lodges pity in their shaggy breast.
But Man, whom nature form'd of milder clay,
With every kind emotion in his heart,
And taught alone to weep; while from her lap
She pours ten thousand delicacies, herbs,
And fruits, as numerous as the drops of rain,
Or beams that gave them birth; shall he, fair form!
Who wears sweet smiles, and looks erect on heaven,
E'er stoop to mingle with the prowling herd,
And dip his tongue in gore! The beast of prey,
Blood-stain'd, deserves to bleed; but you, ye flocks,
What have you done! ye peaceful people, what,
To merit death! you, who have given us milk
In luscious streams, and lent us your own coat
Against the winter's cold! And the plain ox,
That harmless, honest, guileless animal,

In what has he offended! he whose toil,
Patient and ever-ready, clothes the land
With all the pomp of harvest! shall he bleed,
And struggling groan beneath the cruel hands
E'en of the clown he feeds! and that, perhaps,
To swell the riot of th' autumnal feast
Won by his labour! Thus the feeling heart
Would tenderly suggest: but 'tis enough,
In this late age, advent'rous, to have touch'd
Light on the numbers of the *Samian* sage.
High Heaven forbids the bold presumptuous strain,
Whose wisest will has fix'd us in a state
That must not yet to pure perfection rise.

Now when the first foul torrent of the brooks,
Swell'd with the vernal rains, is ebb'd away;
And, whitening, down their mossy-tinctur'd stream
Descends the billowy foam: now is the time
While yet the dark-brown water aids the guile,
To tempt the trout. The well-dissembled fly,
The rod fine-tapering with elastic spring,
Snatch'd from the hoary steed the floating line,
And all thy slender wat'ry stores prepare.
But let not on thy hook the tortur'd worm,
Convulsive, twist in agonizing folds;
Which, by rapacious hunger swallow'd deep,
Gives, as you tear it from the bleeding breast
Of the weak helpless uncomplaining wretch,
Harsh pain and horror to the tender hand.

When with his lively ray the potent sun
Has pierc'd the streams, and rous'd the finny race,
Then, issuing chearful, to thy sport repair;
Chief should the western breezes curling play,

And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds.
High to their fount, this day, amid the hills,
And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks:
The next, pursue their rocky-channel'd maze,
Down to the river, in whose ample wave,
Their little naiads love to sport at large.
Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
Is mix'd the trembling stream, or where it boils
Around the stone, or from the hollow'd bank
Reverted plays in undulating flow,
There throw, nice-judging, the delusive fly;
And as you lead it round in artful curve,
With eye attentive mark the springing game.
Strait as above the surface of the flood
They wanton rise, or urg'd by hunger leap,
Then fix, with gentle twitch, the barbed hook:
Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,
And to the shelving shore slow-dragging some,
With various hand proportion'd to their force.
If yet too young, and easily deceiv'd,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
Him, piteous of his youth and the short space
He has enjoy'd the vital light of Heaven,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream
The speckled captive throw. But should you lure
From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots
Of pendant trees, the monarch of the brook,
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly;
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.
At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun

Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death,
With sullen plunge. At once he darts along,
Deep struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd line.
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,
The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode;
And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,
That feels him still, yet to his furious course
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage,
Till floating broad upon his breathless side,
And to his fate abandon'd, to the shore
You gaily drag your unresisting prize.

Thus pass the temperate hours: but when the sun
Shakes from his noon-day throne the scatt'ring clouds,
Even shooting listless languor thro' the deeps,
Then seek the bank where flow'ring elders crowd,
Where scatter'd wide the lily of the vale
Its balmy essence breathes, where cowslips hang
The dewy head, where purple violets lurk,
With all the lowly children of the shade:
Or lie reclin'd beneath yon spreading ash,
Hung o'er the steep; whence, borne on liquid wing,
The sounding culver shoots; or where the hawk,
High, in the beetling cliff, his airy builds.
There let the classic page thy fancy lead
Thro' rural scenes; such as the *Mantuan* swain
Paints in the matchless harmony of song.
Or catch thyself the landskip, gliding swift
Athwart imagination's vivid eye:
Or by the vocal woods and waters lull'd,

And lost in lonely musing, in the dream,
Confus'd, of careless solitude, where mix
Ten thousand wandering images of things,
Soothe every gust of passion into peace;
All but the swellings of the soften'd heart,
That waken, not disturb, the tranquil mind.
Behold yon breathing prospect bids the Muse
Throw all her beauty forth! But who can paint
Like Nature! Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers!
Or can it mix them with that matchless skill,
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows! If fancy then
Unequal fails beneath the pleasing task,
Ah! what shall language do! Ah! where find words
Ting'd with so many colours; and whose power,
To life approaching, may perfume my lays
With that fine oil, those aromatic gales,
That inexhaustive flow continual round!
Yet, tho' successless, will the toil delight.
Come then, ye virgins, and ye youths, whose hearts
Have felt the raptures of refining love!
And thou, Amanda, come, pride of my song!
Form'd by the Graces, Loveliness itself!
Come with those downcast eyes, sedate and sweet
Those looks demure, that deeply pierce the soul,
Where, with the light of thoughtful reason mix'd,
Shines lively fancy and the feeling heart!
Oh come! and while the rosy-footed May
Steals blushing on, together let us tread
The morning-dews, and gather in their prime
Fresh-blooming flow'rs, to grace thy braided hair,

And thy lov'd bosom, that improves their sweets.
See, where the winding vale its lavish stores,
Irriguous, spreads. See, how the lily drinks
The latent rill, scarce oozing thro' the grass,
Of growth luxuriant; or the humid bank,
In fair profusion, decks. Long let us walk,
Where the breeze blows from yon extended field
Of blossom'd beans. *Arabia* cannot boast
A fuller gale of joy, than liberal, thence
Breathes thro' the sense, and takes the ravish'd soul.
Nor is the mead unworthy of thy foot,
Full of fresh verdure, and unnumber'd flowers,
The negligence of *Nature,* wide, and wild,
Where, undisguis'd by mimic *Art,* she spreads
Unbounded beauty to the roving eye.
Here their delicious task the fervent bees,
In swarming millions, tend. Around, athwart,
Thro' the soft air, the busy nations fly,
Cling to the bud, and, with inserted tube,
Suck its pure essence, its ethereal soul:
And oft, with bolder wing, they soaring dare
The purple heath, or where the wild thyme grows,
And yellow load them with the luscious spoil.
At length the finish'd garden to the view
Its vistas opens, and its alleys green.
Snatch'd thro' the verdant maze, the hurried eye
Distracted wanders; now the bow'ry walk
Of covert close, where scarce a speck of day
Falls on the lengthen'd gloom, protracted sweeps;
Now meets the bending sky, the river now
Dimpling along, the breezy-ruffled lake,
The forest darkening round, the glittering spire,

Th' ethereal mountain, and the distant main.
But why so far excursive, when at hand,
Along the blushing borders, bright with dew,
And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers,
Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace,
Throws out the snow-drop, and the crocus first;
The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue,
And polyanthus of unnumber'd dies;
The yellow wall-flower, stain'd with iron brown;
And lavish stock that scents the garden round.
From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
Anemonies; auriculas, enrich'd
With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves;
And full ranunculas, of glowing red.
Then comes the tulip-race, where Beauty plays
Her idle freaks: from family diffus'd
To family, as flies the father-dust,
The varied colours run; and while they *break*
On the charm'd eye, th' exulting florist marks,
With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
No gradual bloom is wanting; from the bud,
First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes:
Nor hyacinths, of purest virgin white,
Low-bent, and blushing inward; nor jonquils
Of potent fragrance: nor Narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still;
Nor broad carnations; nor gay-spotted pinks;
Nor shower'd from every bush, the damask-rose.
Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
The breath of Nature, and her endless bloom.
Hail, Source of Being! Universal Soul

Of heaven and earth! Essential Presence, hail!
To Thee I bend the knee; to Thee my thoughts,
Continual climb; who, with a Master-hand,
Hast the great whole into perfection touch'd.
By Thee the various vegetative tribes,
Wrapt in a filmy net, and clad with leaves,
Draw the live ether, and imbibe the dew:
By Thee dispos'd into congenial soils,
Stands each attractive plant, and sucks, and swells
The juicy tide; a twining mass of tubes.
At Thy command the vernal sun awakes
The torpid sap, detruded to the root
By wintry winds, that now in fluent dance,
And lively fermentation, mounting, spreads
All this innumerous-colour'd scene of things.
  As rising from the vegetable world
My theme ascends, with equal wing ascend
My panting Muse! and hark how loud the woods
Invite you forth in all your gayest trim!
Lend me your song, ye nightingales! oh pour
The mazy-running soul of melody
Into my varied verse! while I deduce
From the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,
The symphony of Spring, and touch a theme
Unknown to fame, *the passions of the groves.*
  When first the soul of love is sent abroad,
Warm thro' the vital air, and on the heart
Harmonious seizes, the gay troops begin,
In gallant thought, to plume the painted wing;
And try again the long-forgotten strain,
At first faint-warbled. But no sooner grows
The soft infusion prevalent, and wide,

Than all alive, at once their joy o'rflows
In music unconfin'd. Up-springs the lark,
Shrill-voic'd, and loud, the messenger of morn;
Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep tangled, and tree irregular, and bush
Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
Of the coy quiristers that lodge within
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
And wood-lark, o'er the kind contending throng
Superior heard, run thro' the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening *Philomela* deigns
To let them joy, and purposes, in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day.
The black-bird whistles from the thorny brake;
The mellow bulfinch answers from the grove:
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flow'ring furze
Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to these
Innumerous songsters, in the freshening shade
Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix
Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert: while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur thro' the whole.
'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love;
That even to birds, and beasts, the tender Arts
Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love
Can dictate, and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls. First, wide around,

With distant awe, in airy rings they rove,
Endeavouring by a thousand tricks to catch
The cunning, conscious, half-averted glance
Of their regardless charmer. Should she seem
Softening the least approvance to bestow,
Their colours burnish, and by hope inspir'd,
They brisk advance; then, on a sudden struck,
Retire disordered; then again approach;
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
And shiver every feather with desire.

Connubial leagues agreed, to the deep woods
They haste away, all as their fancy leads,
Pleasure, or food, or secret safety prompts;
That Nature's *great command* may be obey'd,
Nor all the sweet sensations they perceive
Indulg'd in vain. Some to the holly-hedge
Nestling repair, and to the thicket some;
Some to the rude protection of the thorn
Commit their feeble offspring: the cleft tree
Offers its kind concealment to a few,
Their food its insects, and its moss their nests.
Others apart far in the grassy dale,
Or roughening waste, their humble texture weave.
But most in woodland solitudes delight,
In unfrequented glooms, or shaggy banks,
Steep, and divided by a babbling brook,
Whose murmurs soothe them all the live-long day,
When by kind duty fix'd. Among the roots
Of hazel, pendant o'er the plaintive stream,
They frame the first foundation of their domes;
Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,
And bound with clay together. Now 'tis nought

But restless hurry thro' the busy air,
Beat by unnumber'd wings. The swallow sweeps
The slimy pool, to build his hanging house
Intent. And often, from the careless back
Of herds and flocks, a thousand tugging bills
Pluck hair, and wool; and oft, when unobserv'd,
Steal from the barn a straw: till soft and warm,
Clean, and compleat, their habitation grows.
As thus the patient dam assiduous sits,
Not to be tempted from her tender task,
Or by sharp hunger, or by smooth delight,
Tho' the whole loosen'd Spring around her blows,
Her sympathizing lover takes his stand
High on th' opponent bank, and ceaseless sings
The tedious time away; or else supplies
Her place a moment, while she sudden flits
To pick the scanty meal. Th' appointed time
With pious toil fulfill'd, the callow young,
Warm'd and expanded into perfect life,
Their brittle bondage break, and come to light;
A helpless family, demanding food
With constant clamour. Oh! what passions then,
What melting sentiments of kindly care,
On the new parents seize! away they fly
Affectionate, and undesiring bear
The most delicious morsel to their young;
Which equally distributed, again
The search begins. Even so a gentle pair,
By fortune sunk, but form'd of generous mold,
And charm'd with cares beyond the vulgar breast,
In some lone cot amid the distant woods,
Sustain'd alone by providential Heaven,

Oft, as they weeping eye their infant train,
Check their own appetites and give them all.
Nor toil alone they scorn: exalting love,
By the great Father of the Spring inspir'd,
Gives instant courage to the *fearful* race,
And to the *simple*, art. With stealthy wing,
Should some rude foot their woody haunts molest,
Amid a neighb'ring bush they silent drop,
And whirring thence, as if alarm'd, deceive
Th'unfeeling school-boy. Hence, around the head
Of wandering swain, the white-wing'd plover wheels
Her sounding slight, and then directly on
In long excursion skims the level lawn,
To tempt him from her nest. The wild-duck, hence
O'er the rough moss, and o'er the trackless waste
The heath-hen flutters; pious fraud! to lead
The hot-pursuing spaniel far astray.
Be not the Muse asham'd here to bemoan
Her brothers of the grove, by tyrant man
Inhuman caught, and in the narrow cage
From liberty confin'd, and boundless air.
Dull are the pretty slaves, their plumage dull,
Ragged, and all its brightening lustre lost;
Nor is that sprightly wildness in their notes
Which, clear and vigorous, warbles from the beech.
Oh! then, ye friends of love and love-taught song,
Spare the soft tribes! this barbarous art forbear!
If on your bosom innocence can win,
Music engage, or piety persuade.
But let not chief the nightingale lament
Her ruin'd care, too delicately fram'd

To brook the harsh confinement of the cage.
Oft when, returning with her loaded bill,
Th' astonish'd mother finds a vacant nest,
By the hard hand of unrelenting clowns
Robb'd, to the ground the vain provision falls;
Her pinions ruffle, and low-drooping scarce
Can bear the mourner to the poplar shade;
Where, all abandon'd to despair, she sings
Her sorrows thro' the night; and on the bough
Sole-sitting, still at every dying fall
Takes up again her lamentable strain
Of winding woe, till, wide around, the woods
Sigh to her song, and with her wail resound.
But now the feather'd youth their former bounds,
Ardent, disdain; and, weighing oft their wings,
Demand the free possession of the sky:
This one glad office more, and then dissolves
Parental love at once, now needless grown.
Unlavish *Wisdom* never works in vain.
'Tis on some evening, sunny, grateful, mild,
When nought but balm is breathing thro' the woods,
With yellow lustre bright, that the new tribes
Visit the spacious heavens, and look abroad
On Nature's common, far as they can see,
Or wing, their range and pasture. O'er the boughs
Dancing about, still at the giddy verge
Their resolution fails; their pinions still,
In loose vibration stretch'd, to trust the void
Trembling refuse: till down before them fly
The parent-guides, and chide, exhort, command,
Or push them off. The surging air receives
Its plumy burden; and their self-taught wings

Winnow the waving element. On ground
Alighted, bolder up again they lead,
Farther and farther on, the length'ning flight,
Till vanish'd every fear, and every power
Rous'd into life and action, light in air
Th' acquitted parents see their soaring race,
And, once rejoicing, never know them more.
High from the summit of a craggy cliff,
Hung o'er the deep, such as amazing frowns
On utmost [1] *Kilda*'s shore, whose lonely race
Resign the setting sun to *Indian* worlds,
The royal eagle draws his vigorous young,
Strong-pounc'd, and ardent with paternal fire.
Now fit to raise a kingdom of their own,
He drives them from his fort, the tow'ring seat,
For ages, of his empire; which, in peace,
Unstain'd he holds, while many a league to sea
He wings his course, and preys in distant isles.
Should I my steps turn to the rural seat,
Whose lofty elms, and venerable oaks,
Invite the rook, who high amid the boughs,
In early Spring, his airy city builds,
And ceaseless caws amusive; there, well-pleas'd,
I might the various polity survey
Of the mix'd household-kind. The careful hen
Calls all her chirping family around,
Fed and defended by the fearless cock,
Whose breast with ardour flames, as on he walks
Graceful, and crows defiance. In the pond,
The finely-checker'd duck, before her train,

[1] The farthest of the western Islands of Scot'and.

Rows garrulous. The stately-sailing swan
Gives out his snowy plumage to the gale;
And, arching proud his neck, with oary feet
Bears forward fierce, and guards his osier-isle,
Protective of his young. The turkey nigh,
Loud-threat'ning, reddens; while the peacock spreads
His every-colour'd glory to the sun,
And swims in radiant majesty along.
O'er the whole homely scene, the cooing dove
Flies thick in amorous chace, and wanton rolls
The glancing eye, and turns the changeful neck.
While thus the gentle tenants of the shade
Indulge their purer loves, the rougher world
Of brutes, below, rush furious into flame,
And fierce desire. Thro' all his lusty veins
The bull, deep-scorch'd, the raging passion feels.
Of pasture sick, and negligent of food,
Scarce seen, he wades among the yellow broom,
While o'er his ample sides the rambling sprays
Luxuriant shoot; or thro' the mazy wood
Dejected wanders, nor th' enticing bud
Crops, tho' it presses on his careless sense.
And oft, in jealous madd'ning fancy wrapt,
He seeks the fight; and, idly-butting, feigns
His rival gor'd in every knotty trunk.
Him should he meet, the bellowing war begins;
Their eyes flash fury; to the hollow'd earth,
Whence the sand flies, they mutter bloody deeds,
And, groaning deep, th' impetuous battle mix:
While the fair heifer, balmy-breathing, near,
Stands kindling up their rage. The trembling steed,
With this hot impulse seiz'd in every nerve,

Nor heeds the rein, nor hears the sounding thong;
Blows are not felt; but tossing high his head,
And by the well known joy to distant plains
Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away;
O'er rocks, and woods, and craggy mountains, flies;
And, neighing, on the aërial summit takes
Th' exciting gale; then, steep-descending, cleaves
The headlong torrents foaming down the hills,
Even where the madness of the straiten'd stream
Turns in black eddies round: such is the force
With which his frantic heart and sinews swell.
Nor undelighted, by the boundless Spring,
Are the broad monsters of the foaming deep:
From the deep ooze, and gelid cavern rous'd,
They flounce and tumble in unwieldy joy.
Dire were the strain, and dissonant, to sing
The cruel raptures of the savage kind:
How by this flame their native wrath sublim'd,
They roam, amid the fury of their heart,
The far-resounding waste in fiercer bands,
And growl their horrid loves. But this the theme
I sing, enraptur'd, to the British Fair,
Forbids, and leads me to the mountain-brow,
Where sits the shepherd on the grassy turf,
Inhaling, healthful, the descending sun.
Around him feeds his many-bleating flock,
Of various cadence; and his sportive lambs,
This way and that convolv'd, in friskful glee,
Their frolics play. And now the sprightly race
Invites them forth; when swift, the signal given,
They start away, and sweep the massy mound
That runs around the hill; the rampart once

Of iron war, in ancient barbarous times,
When disunited Britain ever bled,
Lost in eternal broil: ere yet she grew
To this deep-laid indissoluble state,
Where *Wealth* and *Commerce* lift their golden heads;
And, o'er our labours, *Liberty* and *Law*,
Impartial, watch, the wonder of a world!
What is this *mighty Breath*, ye sages, say,
That, in a powerful language, felt, not heard,
Instructs the fowls of heaven; and thro' their breast
These arts of love diffuses! What, but God!
Inspiring God! who boundless Spirit all,
And unremitting energy, pervades,
Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.
He ceaseless works *alone*; and yet *alone*
Seems not to work; with such perfection fram'd
Is this complex stupendous scheme of things.
But, tho' conceal'd, to every purer eye
Th' informing Author in his works appears:
Chief, lovely Spring, in thee, and thy soft scenes
The Smiling God is seen, while water, earth,
And air, attest his bounty, which exalts
The brute-creation to this finer thought,
And annual melts their undesigning hearts
Profusely thus in tenderness and joy.
Still let my song a nobler note assume,
And sing th' infusive force of Spring on Man;
When heaven and earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being, and serene his soul.
Can he forbear to join the general smile
Of Nature! Can fierce passions vex his breast,
While every gale is peace, and every grove

Is melody! Hence from the bounteous walks
Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe,
Or only lavish to yourselves!—Away!
But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
Of all his works, Creative Bounty burns
With warmest beam! and on your open front,
And liberal eye, sits, from his dark retreat
Inviting modest want. Nor, till invok'd
Can restless goodness wait; your active search
Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplor'd;
Like silent-working Heaven, surprising oft
The lonely heart with unexpected good.
For you the roving spirit of the wind
Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds
Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;
And the sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
Ye flower of human race!—In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head;
Life flows afresh; and young-ey'd Health exalts
The whole creation round. Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase. Pure serenity apace
Induces thought, and contemplation still.
By swift degrees the love of nature works,
And warms the bosom; till at last sublim'd
To rapture, and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God to see a happy world!
These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,
Thy heart inform'd by reason's purer ray,

O Lyttleton, the friend! Thy passions thus
And meditations vary, as at large,
Courting the Muse, thro' *Hagley-Park* thou strayest,
Thy *British Tempe!* There along the dale,
With woods o'er-hung, and shagg'd with mossy rocks,
Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,
And down the rough cascade white-dashing fall,
Or gleam in lengthen'd vista thro' the trees,
You silent steal; or sit beneath the shade
Of solemn oaks, that tuft the swelling mounts
Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless hand,
And pensive listen to the various voice
Of rural peace: the herds, the flocks, the birds,
The hollow-whispering breeze, the plaint of rills,
That, purling down amid the twisted roots
Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake
On the sooth'd ear. From these abstracted oft
You wander through the philosophic world;
Where in bright train continual wonders rise,
Or to the curious or the pious eye.
And oft, conducted by historic truth,
You tread the long extent of backward time:
Planning, with warm benevolence of mind,
And honest zeal unwarp'd by party-rage,
Britannia's weal; how from the venal gulph
To raise her virtue, and her arts revive.
Or, turning thence thy view, these graver thoughts
The Muses charm: while, with sure taste refin'd,
You draw th' inspiring breath of ancient song;
Till nobly rises, emulous, thy own.
Perhaps thy lov'd Lucinda shares thy walk,
With soul to thine attun'd. Then Nature all

Wears to the lover's eye a look of love;
And all the tumult of a guilty world,
Tost by ungenerous passions, sinks away.
The tender heart is animated peace;
And as it pours its copious treasures forth,
In varied converse, softening every theme,
You, frequent-pausing, turn, and from her eyes,
Where meekened sense, and amiable grace,
And lively sweetness dwell, enraptur'd, drink
That nameless spirit of ethereal joy,
Unutterable happiness! which love
Alone bestows, and on a *favour'd few*.
Meantime you gain the height, from whose fair brow
The bursting prospect spreads immense around;
And, snatch'd o'er hill, and dale, and wood, and lawn,
And verdant field, and darkening heath between,
And villages embosom'd soft in trees,
And spiry towns by surging columns mark'd
Of household smoke, your eye excursive roams:
Wide-stretching from the *Hall*, in whose kind haunt
The *Hospitable Genius* lingers still,
To where the broken landskip, by degrees,
Ascending, roughens into rigid hills;
O'er which the *Cambrian* mountains, like far clouds
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise.
Flush'd by the spirit of the genial year,
Now from the virgin's cheek a fresher bloom
Shoots, less and less, the live carnation round;
Her lips blush deeper sweets; she breathes of youth;
The shining moisture swells into her eyes,
In brighter flow; her wishing bosom heaves,
With palpitations wild; kind tumults seize

Her veins, and all her yielding soul is love.
From the keen gaze her lover turns away,
Full of the dear ecstatic power, and sick
With sighing languishment. Ah then, ye fair!
Be greatly cautious of your sliding hearts:
Dare not th' infectious sigh; the pleading look,
Down-cast, and low, in meek submission drest,
But full of guile. Let not the fervent tongue,
Prompt to deceive, with adulation smooth,
Gain on your purpos'd will. Nor in the bower,
Where woodbinds flaunt, and roses shed a couch,
While evening draws her crimson curtains round,
Trust your soft minutes with betraying Man.
And let th' aspiring youth beware of love,
Of the smooth glance beware; for 'tis too late,
When on his heart the torrent-softness pours.
Then Wisdom prostrate lies, and fading fame
Dissolves in air away; while the fond soul,
Wrapt in gay visions of unreal bliss,
Still paints th' illusive form; the kindling grace;
Th' enticing smile; the modest-seeming eye,
Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying heaven,
Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death:
And still, false-warbling in his cheated ear,
Her syren voice, enchanting, draws him on,
To guileful shores, and meads of fatal joy.
Even present, in the very lap of love
Inglorious laid; while music flows around,
Perfumes, and oils, and wine, and wanton hours;
Amid the roses fierce Repentance rears
Her snaky crest: a quick-returning pang
Shoots thro' the conscious heart; where honour still,

And great design, against the oppressive load
Of luxury, by fits, impatient heave.
But absent, what fantastic woes, arous'd,
Rage in each thought, by restless musing fed,
Chill the warm cheek, and blast the bloom of life!
Neglected fortune flies; and sliding swift,
Prone into ruin, fall his scorn'd affairs.
'Tis nought but gloom around: the darken'd sun
Loses his light: the rosy-bosom'd Spring
To weeping fancy pines; and yon bright arch,
Contracted, bends into a dusky vault.
All Nature fades extinct; and she alone
Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,
Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.
Books are but formal dulness, tedious friends;
And sad amid the social band he sits,
Lonely, and unattentive. From his tongue
Th' unfinish'd period falls: while borne away
On swelling thought, his wafted spirit flies
To the vain bosom of his distant fair;
And leaves the semblance of a lover, fix'd
In melancholy site, with head declin'd,
And love-dejected eyes. Sudden he starts,
Shook from his tender trance, and restless runs
To glimmering shades, and sympathetic glooms,
Where the dun umbrage o'er the falling stream,
Romantic, hangs; there thro' the pensive dusk
Strays, in heart-thrilling meditation lost,
Indulging all to love: or on the bank
Thrown, amid drooping lilies, swells the breeze
With sighs unceasing, and the brook with tears.
Thus in soft anguish he consumes the day,

Nor quits his deep retirement till the moon
Peeps thro' the chambers of the fleecy east,
Enlightened by degrees, and in her train
Leads on the gentle hours; then forth he walks,
Beneath the trembling languish of her beam,
With soften'd soul, and wooes the bird of eve
To mingle woes with his: or, while the world
And all the sons of Care lie hush'd in sleep,
Associates with the midnight shadows drear;
And, sighing to the lonely taper, pours
His idly-tortur'd heart into the page,
Meant for the moving messenger of love;
Where rapture burns on rapture, every line
With rising frenzy fir'd. But if on bed
Delirious flung, sleep from his pillow flies.
All night he tosses, nor the balmy power
In any posture finds; till the grey morn
Lifts her pale lustre on the paler wretch,
Exanimate by love: and then perhaps
Exhausted Nature sinks a while to rest,
Still interrupted by distracted dreams,
That o'er the sick imagination rise,
And in black colours paint the mimic scene.
Oft with th' enchantress of his soul he talks;
Sometimes in crowds distress'd; or if retir'd
To secret-winding flower-enwoven bowers,
Far from the dull impertinence of Man,
Just as he, credulous, his endless cares
Begins to lose in blind oblivious love,
Snatch'd from her yielded hand, he knows not how,
Thro' forests huge, and long untravel'd heaths,
With desolation brown, he wanders waste,

In night and tempest wrapt, or shrinks aghast,
Back, from the bending precipice; or wades
The turbid stream below, and strives to reach
The farther shore; where succourless, and sad,
She with extended arms his aid implores,
But strives in vain; borne by th' outrageous flood
To distance down, he rides the ridgy wave,
Or whelm'd beneath the boiling eddy sinks.
These are the charming agonies of love,
Whose misery delights. But thro' the heart
Should jealousy its venom once diffuse,
'Tis then delightful misery no more,
But agony unmix'd, incessant gall,
Corroding every thought, and blasting all
Love's paradise. Ye fairy prospects, then,
Ye beds of roses, and ye bowers of joy,
Farewel! Ye gleamings of departing peace,
Shine out your last! the yellow-tinging plague
Internal vision taints, and in a night
Of livid gloom imagination wraps.
Ah! then, instead of love-enliven'd cheeks,
Of sunny features, and of ardent eyes
With flowing rapture bright, dark looks succeed,
Suffus'd, and glaring with untender fire;
A clouded aspect, and a burning cheek,
Where the whole poison'd soul, malignant, sits,
And frightens love away. Ten thousand fears
Invented wild, ten thousand frantic views
Of horrid rivals hanging on the charms
For which he melts in fondness, eat him up
With fervent anguish, and consuming rage.
In vain reproaches lend their idle aid,

Deceitful pride, and resolution frail,
Giving false peace a moment. Fancy pours,
Afresh, her beauties on his busy thought,
Her first endearments twining round the soul,
With all the witchcraft of ensnaring love.
Straight the fierce storm involves his mind anew,
Flames thro' the nerves, and boils along the veins:
While anxious doubt distracts the tortur'd heart;
For ev'n the sad assurance of his fears
Were peace to what he feels. Thus the warm youth,
Whom Love deludes into his thorny wilds,
Thro' flow'ry tempting paths, or leads a life
Of fever'd rapture, or of cruel care;
His brightest flames extinguish'd all, and all
His brightest moments running down to waste.
But happy they! the happiest of their kind!
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnat'ral oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace, but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love;
Where Friendship full-exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem, enliven'd by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will
With boundless confidence: for nought but love
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.
Let him, ungenerous, who, alone intent
To bless himself, from sordid parents buys
The loathing virgin, in eternal care,
Well-merited, consume his nights and days;

Let barbarous nations, whose inhuman love
Is wild desire, fierce as the suns they feel ;
Let eastern tyrants, from the light of Heaven
Seclude their bosom-slaves, meanly possess'd
Of a mere, lifeless, violated form :
While those whom love cements in holy faith,
And equal transport, free as Nature live,
Disdaining fear. What is the world to them,
Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all !
Who in each other clasp whatever fair
High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish !
Something than beauty dearer, should they look
Or on the mind, or mind-illumin'd face ;
Truth, goodness, honour, harmony, and love,
The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven.
Mean-time a smiling offspring rises round,
And mingles both their graces. By degrees,
The human blossom blows ; and every day,
Soft as it rolls along, shews some new charm,
The father's lustre, and the mother's bloom.
The infant reason grows apace, and calls
For the kind hand of an assiduous care.
Delightful task ! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe th' enlivening spirit, and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.
Oh ! speak the joy, ye, whom the sudden tear
Surprises often, while you look around,
And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss,
All-various Nature pressing on the heart !
An elegant sufficiency, content,

Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven.
These are the matchless joys of virtuous love;
And thus their moments fly. The seasons thus,
As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
Still find them happy; and consenting Spring
Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads:
Till evening comes at last, serene and mild;
When after the long vernal day of life,
Enamoured more, as more remembrance swells
With many a proof of recollected love,
Together down they sink in social sleep;
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.

SUMMER.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed—Invocation—Address to Mr. Dodington—An introductory reflection on the motion of the heavenly bodies; whence the succession of the seasons—As the face of Nature in this season is almost uniform, the progress of the poem is a description of a summer's day — The dawn — Sun-rising — Hymn to the Sun—Forenoon—Summer Insects described—Hay-making—Sheep-shearing—Noon-day—A woodland retreat—Group of herds and flocks—A solemn grove: how it affects a contemplative mind.—A cataract, and rude scene—View of summer in the torrid zone—Storm of thunder and lightning—A tale—The storm over, a serene afternoon—Bathing—Hour of walking—Transition to the prospect of a rich well-cultivated country; which introduces a panegyric on Great Britain—Sun-set—Evening—Night—Summer-meteors—A Comet—The whole concluding with the praise of philosophy.

From bright'ning fields of ether fair disclos'd,
Child of the Sun, refulgent Summer comes,
In pride of youth, and felt thro' Nature's depth:
He comes attended by the sultry *Hours*,
And ever-fanning *Breezes*, on his way;
While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her blushful face; and earth, and skies,
All-smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.

Hence, let me haste into the mid-wood shade,
Where scarce a sun-beam wanders thro' the gloom;
And on the dark-green grass, beside the brink
Of haunted stream, that by the roots of oak
Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
And sing the glories of the circling year.

Come, *Inspiration!* from thy hermit-seat,
By mortal seldom found: may Fancy dare,
From thy fix'd serious eye, and raptur'd glance
Shot on surrounding Heaven, to steal one look
Creative of the Poet, every power
Exalting to an Ecstasy of soul.

And thou, my youthful Muse's early friend,
In whom the human graces all unite;
Pure light of mind, and tenderness of heart;
Genius, and wisdom; the gay social sense,
By decency chastis'd; goodness and wit,
In seldom-meeting harmony combin'd;
Unblemish'd honour, and an active zeal
For *Britain*'s glory, Liberty, and Man:
O Dodington! attend my rural song,
Stoop to my theme, inspirit every line,
And teach me to deserve thy just applause!

With what an awful world-revolving power
Were first th' unwieldy planets launch'd along
Th' illimitable void! Thus to remain,
Amid the flux of many thousand years,
That oft has swept the toiling race of men,
And all their labour'd monuments away,
Firm, unremitting, matchless, in their course;
To the kind-temper'd change of night and day,
And of the seasons ever stealing round,

Minutely faithful: Such th' all-perfect Hand,
That pois'd, impels, and rules the steady Whole.
When now no more th' alternate *Twins* are fir'd,
And *Cancer* reddens with the solar blaze,
Short is the doubtful empire of the night;
And soon, observant of approaching day,
The meek-ey'd Morn appears, mother of dews,
At first faint-gleaming in the dappled east:
Till far o'er ether spreads the widening glow;
And, from before the lustre of her face,
White break the clouds away. With quicken'd step,
Brown Night retires. Young Day pours in apace,
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.
The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top,
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn.
Blue, thro' the dusk, the smoking currents shine;
And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps, aukward: while along the forest-glade
The wild deer trip, and often turning gaze
At early passenger. Music awakes
The native voice of undissembled joy;
And thick around the woodland hymns arise.
Rous'd by the cock, the soon-clad shepherd leaves
His mossy cottage, where with *Peace* he dwells;
And from the crowded fold, in order, drives
His flock to taste the verdure of the morn.
Falsely luxurious, will not Man awake;
And, springing from the bed of sloth, enjoy
The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
To meditation due and sacred song!
For is there aught in sleep can charm the wise!
To lie in dead oblivion, losing half

The fleeting moments of too short a life;
Total extinction of th' enlightened soul!
Or else, to feverish vanity alive,
Wilder'd, and tossing thro' distemper'd dreams!
Who would in such a gloomy state remain
Longer than Nature craves; when every Muse
And every blooming pleasure wait without
To bless the wildly-devious morning-walk?
  But yonder comes the powerful King of Day,
Rejoicing in the East. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow
Illum'd with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo! now, apparent all,
Aslant the dew-bright earth, and colour'd air,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad;
And sheds the shining day, that burnish'd plays
On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering
streams,
High-gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer, Light!
Of all material beings first, and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's resplendent robe!
Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapt
In unessential gloom; and thou, O Sun!
Soul of surrounding worlds! in whom best seen
Shines out thy Maker! may I sing of Thee!
  'Tis by thy secret, strong, attractive force,
As with a chain indissoluble bound,
Thy System rolls entire: from the far bourne
Of utmost *Saturn*, wheeling wide his round
Of thirty years, to *Mercury*, whose disk
Can scarce be caught by philosophic eye,
Lost in the near effulgence of thy blaze.

Informer of the planetary train!
Without whose quickening glance their cumbrous orbs
Were brute unlovely mass, inert and dead,
And not, as now, the green abodes of life!
How many forms of being wait on thee,
Inhaling spirit; from th' unfetter'd mind,
By thee sublim'd, down to the daily race,
The mixing myriads of thy setting beam!
The vegetable world is also thine,
Parent of *Seasons!* who the pomp precede
That waits thy throne, as thro' thy vast domain,
Annual, along the bright ecliptic road,
In world-rejoicing state, it moves sublime.
Mean-time th' expecting nations, circled gay
With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
Implore thy bounty, or send grateful up
A common hymn: while round thy beaming car,
High-seen, the *Seasons* lead, in sprightly dance
Harmonious knit, the rosy-finger'd *Hours,*
The *Zephyrs* floating loose, the timely *Rains,*
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed *Dews,*
And soften'd into joy the surly *Storms.*
These, in successive turn, with lavish hand,
Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower,
Herbs, flowers, and fruits; till, kindling at thy touch,
From land to land is flush'd the vernal year.
Nor to the surface of enliven'd earth,
Graceful with hills and dales, and leafy woods,
Her liberal tresses, is thy force confin'd:
But, to the bowel'd cavern-darting deep,
The mineral kinds confess thy mighty power.

Effulgent, hence the veiny marble shines;
Hence Labour draws his tools; hence burnish'd War
Gleams on the day; the nobler works of Peace
Hence bless mankind, and generous Commerce
binds
The round of nations in a golden chain.
Th' unfruitful rock itself, impregn'd by thee,
In dark retirement forms the lucid stone.
The lively diamond drinks thy purest rays,
Collected light, compact; that, polish'd bright,
And all its native lustre let abroad,
Dares, as it sparkles on the fair-one's breast,
With vain ambition emulate her eyes.
At thee the ruby lights its deep'ning glow,
And with a waving radiance inward flames.
From thee the sapphire, solid ether, takes
Its hue cerulean; and, of evening tinct,
The purple-streaming amethyst is thine.
With thy own smile the yellow topaz burns:
Nor deeper verdure dyes the robe of Spring,
When first she gives it to the southern gale,
Than the green emerald shows. But, all combin'd,
Thick thro' the whit'ning opal play thy beams;
Or, flying several from its surface, form
A trembling variance of revolving hues,
As the site varies in the gazer's hand.
The very dead creation, from thy touch,
Assumes a mimic life. By thee refin'd,
In brighter mazes the reluctent stream
Plays o'er the mead. The precipice abrupt,
Projecting horror on the blackened flood,
Softens at thy return. The desart joys

Wildly, thro' all his melancholy bounds.
Rude ruins glitter; and the briny deep,
Seen from some pointed promontory's top,
Far to the blue horizon's utmost verge,
Restless, reflects a floating gleam. But this,
And all the much-transported Muse can sing,
Are to thy beauty, dignity, and use,
Unequal far, great delegated source
Of light, and life, and grace, and joy below!
How shall I then attempt to sing of Him,
Who, Light Himself, in uncreated light
Invested deep, dwells awfully retir'd
From mortal eye, or angel's purer ken;
Whose single smile has, from the first of time,
Fill'd, overflowing, all those lamps of Heaven,
That beam for ever thro' the boundless sky:
But, should He hide his face, th' astonish'd sun,
And all th' extinguish'd stars, would loos'ning start
Wide from their spheres, and Chaos come again.
And yet was every fault'ring tongue of Man,
Almighty Father! silent in thy praise,
Thy works themselves would raise a general voice,
Even in the depth of solitary woods,
By human foot untrod, proclaim thy power,
And to the quire celestial Thee resound,
Th' eternal cause, support and end of all!
To me be Nature's volume broad-display'd;
And to peruse its all-instructing page,
Or, haply catching inspiration thence,
Some easy passage, raptur'd, to translate,
My sole delight; as thro' the falling glooms
Pensive I stray, or with the rising dawn

On Fancy's eagle-wing excursive soar!
Now, flaming up the heav'ns, the potent sun
Melts into limpid air the high-rais'd clouds,
And morning fogs that hover'd round the hills
In party-colour'd bands; till wide unveil'd
The face of Nature shines, from where earth seems,
Far-stretch'd around, to meet the bending sphere.
Half in a blush of clustering roses lost,
Dew-dropping *Coolness* to the shade retires;
There, on the verdant turf, or flow'ry bed,
By gelid founts and careless rills to muse:
While tyrant *Heat*, dispreading thro' the sky,
With rapid sway, his burning influence darts
On Man, and beast, and herb, and tepid stream.
Who can unpitying see the flow'ry race,
Shed by the morn, their new-flush'd bloom resign,
Before the parching beam! So fade the Fair,
When fevers revel thro' their azure veins.
But one, the lofty follower of the sun,
Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
Drooping all night; and, when he warm returns,
Points her enamour'd bosom to his ray.
Home, from his morning task, the swain retreats,
His flock before him stepping to the fold:
While the full-udder'd mother lows around
The cheerful cottage, then expecting food,
The food of innocence, and health! the daw,
The rook and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks
That the calm village in their verdant arms
Sheltering embrace, direct their lazy flight;
Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower'd,
All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.

Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene;
And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
The house-dog, with the vacant greyhound, lies,
Out-stretch'd, and sleepy. In his slumbers one
Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults
O'er hill and dale, till, wakened by the wasp,
They starting snap. Nor shall the Muse disdain
To let the little noisy summer-race
Live in her lay, and flutter through her song,
Not mean, tho' simple: to the Sun ally'd,
From him they draw their animating fire.
Wak'd by his warmer ray, the reptile young
Come wing'd abroad; by the light air upborn,
Lighter, and full of soul. From every chink,
And secret corner, where they slept away
The wintry storms; or rising from their tombs,
To higher life; by myriads, forth at once,
Swarming they pour; of all the vary'd hues
Their beauty-beaming parent can disclose.
Ten thousand forms! ten thousand different tribes!
People the blaze. To sunny waters some
By fatal instinct fly; where on the pool
They, sportive, wheel; or, sailing down the stream,
Are snatch'd immediate by the quick-eyed trout,
Or darting salmon. Thro' the green-wood glade
Some love to stray; there lodg'd, amus'd and fed,
In the fresh leaf. Luxurious, others make
The meads their choice, and visit every flower,
And every latent herb: for the sweet task,
To propagate their kinds, and where to wrap,
In what soft beds, their young yet undisclos'd,
Employs their tender care. Some to the house,

The fold, and dairy, hungry, bend their flight;
Sip round the pail, or taste the curdling cheese:
Oft, inadvertent, from the milky stream
They meet their fate; or, welt'ring in the bowl,
With powerless wings around them wrapt, expire.
But chief to heedless flies the window proves
A constant death; where, gloomily retir'd,
The villain spider lives, cunning, and fierce,
Mixture abhorr'd! Amid a mangled heap
Of carcasses, in eager watch he sits,
O'erlooking all his waving snares around.
Near the dire cell the dreadless wanderer oft
Passes, as oft the ruffian shows his front;
The prey at last ensnar'd, he dreadful darts,
With rapid glide, along the leaning line;
And, fixing in the wretch his cruel fangs,
Strikes backward, grimly pleas'd: the flutt'ring wing,
And shriller sound declare extreme distress,
And ask the helping hospitable hand.
Resounds the living surface of the ground;
Nor undelightful is the ceaseless hum
To him who muses thro' the woods at noon;
Or drowsy shepherd, as he lies reclin'd,
With half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade
Of willows grey, close-crowding o'er the brook.
Gradual, from these what numerous kinds descend,
Evading e'en the microscopic eye!
Full Nature swarms with life; one wondrous mass
Of animals, or atoms organiz'd,
Waiting the *vital Breath,* when Parent-Heaven
Shall bid his spirit blow. The hoary fen,

In putrid steams, emits the living cloud
Of pestilence. Thro' subterranean cells,
Where searching sun-beams scarce can find a way,
Earth animated heaves. The flow'ry leaf
Wants not its soft inhabitants. Secure,
Within its winding citadel, the stone
Holds multitudes. But chief the forest-boughs,
That dance unnumber'd to the playful breeze,
The downy orchard, and the melting pulp
Of mellow fruit, the nameless nations feed
Of evanescent insects. Where the pool
Stands mantled o'er with green, invisible,
Amid the floating verdure millions stray.
Each liquid too, whether it pierces, sooths,
Inflames, refreshes, or exalts the taste,
With various forms abounds. Nor is the stream
Of purest crystal, nor the lucid air,
Tho' one transparent vacancy it seems,
Void of their unseen people. These, conceal'd
By the kind art of forming Heav'n, escape
The grosser eye of Man: for, if the worlds
In worlds inclos'd should on his senses burst,
From cates ambrosial, and the nectar'd bowl,
He would abhorrent turn; and in dead night,
When silence sleeps o'er all, be stunn'd with noise.
Let no presuming impious railer tax
Creative Wisdom, as if aught was form'd
In vain, or not for admirable ends.
Shall little haughty ignorance pronounce
His works unwise, of which the smallest part
Exceeds the narrow vision of her mind?
As if upon a full-proportion'd dome,

On swelling columns heav'd, the pride of Art!
A critic-fly, whose feeble ray scarce spreads
An inch around, with blind presumption bold,
Should dare to tax the structure of the whole.
And lives the Man, whose universal eye
Has swept at once th' unbounded scheme of things;
Mark'd their dependance so, and firm accord,
As with unfault'ring accent to conclude
That *this* availeth nought! Has any seen
The mighty chain of beings, lessening down
From infinite Perfection to the brink
Of dreary *nothing*, desolate abyss!
From which astonish'd thought, recoiling, turns!
Till then alone let zealous praise ascend,
And hymns of holy wonder, to that Power,
Whose wisdom shines as lovely on our minds,
As on our smiling eyes his servant sun.

Thick, in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
Upward, and downward, thwarting, and convolv'd,
The quiv'ring nations sport; till, tempest-wing'd,
Fierce Winter sweeps them from the face of day.
Ev'n so luxurious Men, unheeding, pass
An idle summer life in fortune's shine,
A season's glitter! Thus they flutter on
From toy to toy, from vanity to vice;
Till, blown away by death, oblivion comes
Behind, and strikes them from the book of life.

Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead:
The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
Healthful, and strong; full as the summer-rose
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
Half-naked, swelling on the sight, and all

Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
E'en stooping age is here; and infant-hands
Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
O'ercharg'd, amid the kind oppression roll.
Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row
Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
They spread the breathing harvest to the sun,
That throws refreshful round a rural smell:
Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,
In order gay. While heard from dale to dale,
Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
Of happy labour, love, and social glee.

Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compell'd, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool: this bank abrupt and high,
And that fair-spreading in a pebbled shore.
Urg'd to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men, and boys, and dogs,
Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in:
Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast, they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And panting labour to the farthest shore.
Repeated this, till deep the well-wash'd fleece
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream;
Heavy, and dripping, to the breezy brow
Slow move the harmless race: where, as they spread

Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturb'd, and wond'ring what this wild
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
The country fill; and, toss'd from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last, of snowy white, the gather'd flocks
Are in the wattled pen innumerous press'd,
Head above head; and, rang'd in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-drest maids attending round.
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthron'd,
Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays
Her smiles, sweet-beaming, on her shepherd-king;
While the glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
Meantime, their joyous task goes on apace:
Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some,
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side,
To stamp his master's cypher ready stand;
Others th' unwilling wether drag along;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy
Holds by the twisted horns th' indignant ram.
Behold where bound, and of its robe bereft,
By needy Man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face,
What dumb complaining innocence appears!
Fear not, ye gentle tribes, 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you wav'd!
No, 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care,

Borrow'd your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.
A simple scene! yet hence Britannia sees
Her solid grandeur rise: hence she commands
Th' exalted stores of every brighter clime,
The treasures of the sun without his rage:
Hence, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land: her dreadful thunder hence
Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, e'en now,
Impending hangs o'er *Gallia*'s humbled coast;
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.
'Tis raging Noon; and, vertical, the Sun
Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.
O'er heaven and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns; and all
From pole to pole is undistinguish'd blaze.
In vain the sight, dejected to the ground,
Stoops for relief; thence hot ascending steams,
And keen reflection, pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parch'd, the cleaving fields
And slipp'ry lawn an arid hue disclose,
Blast Fancy's blooms, and wither e'en the Soul.
Echo no more returns the cheerful sound
Of sharp'ning scythe: the mower sinking heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flow'rs perfum'd;
And scarce a chirping grass-hopper is heard
Thro' the dumb mead. Distressful Nature pants.
The very streams look languid from afar;
Or, thro' th' unshelter'd glade, impatient seem
To hurl into the covert of the grove.
All-conquering Heat, oh, intermit thy wrath!
And on my throbbing temples potent thus

Beam not so fierce! incessant still you flow,
And still another fervent flood succeeds,
Pour'd on the head profuse. In vain I sigh,
And restless turn, and look around for Night;
Night is far off; and hotter hours approach.
Thrice happy he! that on the sunless side
Of a romantic mountain, forest-crown'd,
Beneath the whole collected shade reclines:
Or in the gelid caverns, woodbine-wrought,
And fresh bedew'd with ever-spouting streams,
Sits coolly calm; while all the world without,
Unsatisfied, and sick, tosses in noon.
Emblem instructive of the virtuous Man,
Who keeps his temper'd mind serene, and pure,
And every passion aptly harmoniz'd,
Amid a jarring world with vice inflam'd.
Welcome, ye shades! ye bow'ry thickets, hail!
Ye lofty pines! ye venerable oaks!
Ye ashes wild, resounding o'er the steep!
Delicious is your shelter to the soul,
As to the hunted hart the sallying spring,
Or stream full-flowing, that his swelling sides
Laves, as he floats along the herbag'd brink.
Cool, thro' the nerves, your pleasing comfort glides;
The heart beats glad; the fresh-expanded eye
And ear resume their watch; the sinews knit;
And life shoots swift thro' all the lighten'd limbs.
Around th' adjoining brook, that purls along
The vocal grove, now fretting o'er a rock,
Now scarcely moving thro' a reedy pool,
Now starting to a sudden stream, and now
Gently diffus'd into a limpid plain;

A various group the herds and flocks compose,
Rural confusion! On the grassy bank
Some ruminating lie; while others stand
Half in the flood, and often bending sip
The circling surface. In the middle droops
The strong labourious ox, of honest front,
Which incompos'd he shakes; and from his sides
The troublous insects lashes with his tail,
Returning still. Amid his subjects safe,
Slumbers the monarch-swain; his careless arm
Thrown round his head, on downy moss sustain'd;
Here laid his scrip, with wholesome viands fill'd;
There, list'ning every noise, his watchful dog.
Light fly his slumbers, if perchance a flight
Of angry gad-flies fasten on the herd;
That startling scatter from the shallow brook,
In search of lavish stream. Tossing the foam,
They scorn the keeper's voice, and scour the plain,
Thro' all the bright severity of noon;
While, from their labouring breasts, a hollow moan
Proceeding, runs low-bellowing round the hills.
Oft in this season too the horse, provok'd,
While his big sinews full of spirits swell,
Trembling with vigour, in the heat of blood,
Springs the high fence; and, o'er the field effus'd,
Darts on the gloomy flood, with stedfast eye,
And heart estrang'd to fear: his nervous chest,
Luxuriant, and erect, the seat of strength!
Bears down th' opposing stream: quenchless his thirst;
He takes the river at redoubled draughts;
And with wide nostrils, snorting, skims the wave.
Still let me pierce into the midnight depth

Of yonder grove, of wildest largest growth,
That, forming high in air a woodland quire,
Nods o'er the mount beneath. At every step,
Solemn, and slow, the shadows blacker fall,
And all is awful listening gloom around.
These are the haunts of Meditation, these
The scenes where ancient bards th'inspiring breath,
Extatic, felt; and, from this world retir'd,
Convers'd with angels, and immortal forms,
On gracious errands bent: to save the fall
Of virtue, struggling on the brink of vice;
In waking whispers, and repeated dreams,
To hint pure thought, and warn the favour'd soul
For future trials fated to prepare;
To prompt the poet, who devoted gives
His muse to better themes; to soothe the pangs
Of dying worth, and from the patriot's breast,
(Backward to mingle in detested war,
But foremost when engag'd) to turn the death;
And numberless such offices of love,
Daily, and nightly, zealous to perform.
Shook sudden from the bosom of the sky,
A thousand shapes or glide athwart the dusk,
Or stalk majestic on. Deep-rous'd, I feel
A sacred terror, and severe delight,
Creep through my mortal frame; and thus, methinks,
A voice, than human more, th' abstracted ear
Of fancy strikes. "Be not of us afraid,
" Poor kindred Man! thy fellow-creatures, we
" From the same Parent-Power our beings drew,
" The same our Lord, and laws, and great pursuit.
" Once some of us, like thee, thro' stormy life,

" Toil'd, tempest-beaten, ere we could attain
" This holy calm, this harmony of mind,
" Where purity and peace immingle charms.
" Then fear not us; but with responsive song,
" Amid these dim recesses, undisturb'd
" By noisy folly and discordant vice,
" Of Nature sing with us, and Nature's God.
" Here frequent, at the visionary hour,
" When musing midnight reigns or silent noon,
" Angelic harps are in full concert heard,
" And voices chanting from the wood-crown'd hill,
" The deep'ning dale, or inmost sylvan glade:
" A privilege bestow'd by us, alone,
" On contemplation, or the hallow'd ear
" Of Poet, swelling to seraphic strain."
And art thou, Stanley [1], of that sacred band!
Alas, for us too soon! — tho' rais'd above
The reach of human pain, above the flight
Of human joy; yet, with a mingled ray
Of sadly-pleas'd remembrance, must thou feel
A mother's love, a mother's tender woe:
Who seeks thee still, in many a former scene;
Seeks thy fair form, thy lovely-beaming eyes,
Thy pleasing converse, by gay lively sense
Inspir'd; where moral wisdom mildly shone,
Without the toil of art; and virtue glow'd,
In all her smiles, without forbidding pride.
But, O thou best of parents! wipe thy tears;
Or rather to Parental Nature pay

[1] A young Lady, well known to the Author, who died at the age of eighteen, in the year 1738.

The tears of grateful joy, who for a while
Lent thee this younger-self, this op'ning bloom
Of thy enlighten'd mind and gentle worth.
Believe the Muse: *the wintry blast of death*
Kills not the buds of virtue; no, they spread,
Beneath the heavenly beam of brighter suns,
Thro' endless ages, into higher powers.
Thus up the mount, in airy vision rapt,
I stray, regardless whither; till the sound
Of a near fall of water every sense
Wakes from the charm of thought: swift-shrinking back,
I check my steps, and view the broken scene.
Smooth to the shelving brink a copious flood
Rolls fair, and placid; where collected all,
In one impetuous torrent, down the steep
It thund'ring shoots, and shakes the country round.
At first, an azure sheet, it rushes broad;
Then whit'ning by degrees, as prone it falls,
And from the loud-resounding rocks below,
Dash'd in a cloud of foam, it sends aloft
A hoary mist, and forms a ceaseless shower.
Nor can the tortur'd wave here find repose:
But, raging still amid the shaggy rocks,
Now flashes o'er the scatter'd fragments, now
Aslant the hollow'd channel rapid darts;
And falling fast from gradual slope to slope,
With wild infracted course, and lessen'd roar,
It gains a safer bed, and steals, at last,
Along the mazes of the quiet vale.
Invited from the cliff, to whose dark brow
He clings, the steep-ascending eagle soars,

With upward pinions thro' the flood of day;
And, giving full his bosom to the blaze,
Gains on the sun; while all the tuneful race,
Smit by afflictive noon, disorder'd droop,
Deep in the thicket; or, from bower to bower
Responsive, force an interrupted strain.
The stock-dove only thro' the forest cooes,
Mournfully hoarse; oft ceasing from his plaint,
Short interval of weary woe! again
The sad idea of his murder'd mate,
Struck from his side by savage fowler's guile,
Across his fancy comes; and then resounds,
A louder song of sorrow thro' the grove.

Beside the dewy border let me sit
All in the freshness of the humid air;
There in that hollowed rock, grotesque and wild,
An ample chair moss-lin'd, and over head
By flow'ring umbrage shaded; where the bee
Strays diligent, and with th' extracted balm
Of fragrant woodbine loads his little thigh.

Now, while I taste the sweetness of the shade,
While Nature lies around deep-lull'd in Noon,
Now come, bold *Fancy*, spread a daring flight,
And view the wonders of the *torrid Zone!*
Climes unrelenting! with whose rage compar'd,
Yon blaze is feeble, and yon skies are cool.

See how at once the bright-effulgent Sun,
Rising direct, swift chases from the sky
The short-liv'd twilight; and with ardent blaze
Looks gaily fierce thro' all the dazzling air:
He mounts his throne; but kind before him sends,
Issuing from out the portals of the morn,

The *general Breeze* [1], to mitigate his fire,
And breathe refreshment on a fainting world.
Great are the scenes, with dreadful beauty crown'd,
And barbarous wealth, that see, each circling year,
Returning suns [2] and *double seasons* pass:
Rocks rich in gems, and mountains big with mines,
That on the high equator ridgy rise,
Whence many a bursting stream auriferous plays:
Majestic woods, of every vigorous green,
Stage above stage, high-waving o'er the hills;
Or to the far horizon wide diffus'd,
A boundless deep immensity of shade.
Here lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
The noble sons of potent heat, and floods
Prone-rushing from the clouds, rear high to Heaven
Their thorny stems, and broad around them throw
Meridian gloom. Here, in eternal prime,
Unnumber'd fruits, of keen delicious taste
And vital spirit, drink amid the cliffs,
And burning sands that bank the shrubby vales,
Redoubled day, yet in their rugged coats
A friendly juice to cool its rage contain.
Bear me, *Pomona!* to thy citron-groves;
To where the lemon and the piercing lime,

[1] Which blows constantly between the tropics from the east, or the collateral points, the north-east and south-east: caused by the pressure of the rarefied air on that before it, according to the diurnal motion of the sun from east to west.

[2] In all climates between the tropics, the sun, as he passes and repasses in his annual motion, is twice a year vertical, which produces this effect.

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With the deep orange, glowing thro' the green,
Their lighter glories blend. Lay me reclin'd
Beneath the spreading tamarind, that shakes,
Fann'd by the breeze, its fever-cooling fruit!
Deep in the night the massy locust sheds
Quench my hot limbs! or lead me thro' the maze,
Embowering endless, of the *Indian* fig!
Or, thrown at gayer ease on some fair brow,
Let me behold, by breezy murmurs cool'd,
Broad o'er my head the verdant cedar wave,
And high palmetos lift their graceful shade!
Or, stretch'd amid these orchards of the sun,
Give me to drain the cocoa's milky bowl,
And from the palm to draw its fresh'ning wine!
More bounteous far than all the frantic juice
Which *Bacchus* pours. Nor, on its slender twigs
Low-bending, be the full pomegranate scorn'd;
Nor, creeping thro' the woods, the gelid race
Of berries. Oft in humble station dwells
Unboastful worth, above fastidious pomp.
Witness, thou best anana! thou the pride
Of vegetable life, beyond whate'er
The poets imag'd in the golden age:
Quick, let me strip thee of thy tufty coat,
Spread thy ambrosial stores, and feast with *Jove!*
From these the prospect varies. Plains immense
Lie stretch'd below, interminable meads,
And vast savannahs, where the wand'ring eye,
Unfixt, is in a verdant ocean lost.
Another *Flora* there, of bolder hues,
And richer sweets, beyond our garden's pride,
Plays o'er the fields, and showers with sudden hand

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Exuberant spring: for oft these valleys shift
Their green-embroider'd robe to fiery brown,
And swift to green again, as scorching suns,
Or streaming dews and torrent rains, prevail.
Along these lonely regions where, retir'd
From little scenes of art, great *Nature* dwells
In awful solitude, and nought is seen
But the wild herds that own no master's stall,
Prodigious rivers roll their fatt'ning seas,
On whose luxuriant herbage, half-conceal'd,
Like a fall'n cedar, far diffus'd his train,
Cas'd in green scales, the crocodile extends.
The flood disparts: behold! in plaited mail,
Behemoth [1] rears his head. Glanc'd from his side,
The darted steel in idle shivers flies:
He fearless walks the plain, or seeks the hills;
Where, as he crops his vary'd fare, the herds,
In wid'ning circle round, forget their food,
And at the harmless stranger wond'ring gaze.
Peaceful, beneath primeval trees, that cast
Their ample shade o'er *Niger*'s yellow stream,
And where the *Ganges* rolls his sacred wave;
Or mid the central depth of black'ning woods,
High-rais'd in solemn theatre around,
Leans the huge elephant: wisest of brutes!
O truly wise! with gentle might endow'd,
Tho' powerful, not destructive! Here he sees
Revolving ages sweep the changeful earth,
And empires rise and fall; regardless he
Of what the never-resting race of Men

[1] The hippopotamus, or river-horse. See Job, chapt. 40.

Project: thrice happy! could he 'scape their guile,
Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps;
Or with his tow'ry grandeur swell their state,
The pride of kings! or else his strength pervert,
And bid him rage amid the mortal fray,
Astonish'd at the madness of mankind!

Wide o'er the winding umbrage of the floods,
Like vivid blossoms glowing from afar,
Thick-swarm the brighter birds. For Nature's hand,
That with a sportive vanity has deck'd
The plumy nations, there her gayest hues
Profusely pours. [1] But, if she bids them shine,
Array'd in all the beauteous beams of day,
Yet, frugal still, she humbles them in song.
Nor envy we the gaudy robes they lent
Proud *Montezuma*'s realm, whose legions cast
A boundless radiance waving on the sun,
While Philomel is ours; while in our shades,
Thro' the soft silence of the list'ning night,
The sober-suited songstress trills her lay.

But come, my *Muse!* the desart-barrier burst,
A wild expanse of lifeless sand and sky:
And, swifter than the toiling caravan
Shoot o'er the vale of *Sennar*, ardent climb
The *Nubian* mountains, and the secret bounds
Of jealous *Abyssinia* boldly pierce!
Thou art no ruffian, who beneath the mask
Of social commerce com'st to rob their wealth!

[1] In all the regions of the torrid zone, the birds, tho' more beautiful in their plumage, are observed to be less melodious than ours.

No *holy Fury* thou, blaspheming Heaven,
With consecrated steel to stab their peace,
And thro' the land, yet red from civil wounds,
To spread the purple tyranny of *Rome!*
Thou, like the harmless bee, may'st freely range,
From mead to mead, bright with exalted flowers;
From jasmine grove to grove, may'st wander gay
Thro' palmy shades and aromatic woods,
That grace the plains, invest the peopled hills,
And up the more than Alpine mountains wave.
There on the breezy summit, spreading fair,
For many a league; or on stupendous rocks,
That, from the sun-redoubling valley lift,
Cool to the middle air, their lawny tops;
Where palaces, and fanes, and villas rise;
And gardens smile around, and cultur'd fields;
And fountains gush; and careless herds and flocks
Securely stray; a world within itself,
Disdaining all assault: there let me draw
Ethereal soul! there drink reviving gales,
Profusely breathing from the spicy groves,
And vales of fragrance! there at distance hear
The roaring floods, and cataracts, that sweep
From disembowel'd earth the virgin gold!
And o'er the vary'd landskip, restless, rove,
Fervent with life of every fairer kind!
A land of wonders! which the sun still eyes
With ray direct, as of the lovely realm
Inamour'd, and delighting there to dwell.
How chang'd the scene! In blazing height of noon,
The sun, oppress'd, is plung'd in thickest gloom.
Still horror reigns, a dreary twilight round,

Of struggling night and day malignant mix'd.
For to the hot equator crouding fast,
Where, highly rarefy'd, the yielding air
Admits their stream, incessant vapours roll,
Amazing clouds on clouds continual heap'd;
Or whirl'd tempestuous by the gusty wind,
Or silent borne along, heavy, and slow,
With the big stores of steaming oceans charg'd.
Meantime, amid these upper seas, condens'd
Around the cold aërial mountain's brow,
And by conflicting winds together dash'd,
The Thunder holds his black tremendous throne,
From cloud to cloud the rending Lightnings rage;
Till, in the furious elemental war
Dissolv'd, the whole precipitated mass
Unbroken floods and solid torrents pours.

The treasures these, hid from the bounded search
Of ancient knowledge; whence, with annual pomp,
Rich king of floods! o'erflows the swelling *Nile*.
From his two springs, in *Gojam*'s sunny realm,
Pure-welling out, he thro' the lucid lake
Of fair *Dambea* rolls his infant-stream.
There, by the Naiads nurs'd, he sports away
His playful youth, amid the fragrant isles
That with unfading verdure smile around.
Ambitious, thence the manly river breaks,
And, gathering many a flood, and copious fed
With all the mellow'd treasures of the sky,
Winds in progressive majesty along:
Thro' splendid kingdoms now devolves his maze,
Now wanders wild o'er solitary tracts
Of life-deserted sand; till, glad to quit

The joyless desart, down the *Nubian* rocks,
From thund'ring steep to steep, he pours his urn,
And *Egypt* joys beneath the spreading wave.
His brother *Niger* too, and all the floods
In which the full-form'd maids of *Afric* lave
Their jetty limbs; and all that from the tract
Of woody mountains stretch'd thro' gorgeous *Ind*
Fall on *Cormandel*'s coast, or *Malabar*;
From [1] *Menam*'s orient stream, that nightly shines
With insect-lamps, to where Aurora sheds
On *Indus'* smiling banks the rosy shower:
All, at this bounteous season, ope their urns,
And pour untoiling harvest o'er the land.
Nor less thy world, Columbus! drinks, refresh'd,
The lavish moisture of the melting year.
Wide o'er his isles, the branching *Oronoque*
Rolls a brown deluge; and the native drives
To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees,
At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
Swell'd by a thousand streams, impetuous hurl'd
From all the roaring *Andes*, huge descends
The mighty [2] *Orellana*. Scarce the Muse
Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
Of rushing water; scarce she dares attempt
The sea-like *Plata*; to whose dread expanse,
Continuous depth, and wondrous length of course,
Our floods are rills. With unabated force,

[1] The river that runs thro' *Siam*; on whose banks a vast multitude of those insects called *fire-flies* make a beautiful appearance in the night.

[2] The river of the Amazons.

In silent dignity they sweep along,
And traverse realms unknown, and blooming wilds,
And fruitful desarts, worlds of solitude,
Where the sun smiles and seasons teem in vain,
Unseen, and unenjoy'd. Forsaking these,
O'er peopled plains they fair-diffusive flow,
And many a nation feed, and circle safe,
In their soft bosom, many a happy isle;
The seat of blameless *Pan*, yet undisturb'd
By christian crimes and *Europe*'s cruel sons.
Thus pouring on they proudly seek the deep,
Whose vanquish'd tide, recoiling from the shock,
Yields to this liquid weight of half the globe;
And Ocean trembles for his green domain.

But what avails this wondrous waste of wealth!
This gay profusion of luxurious bliss!
This pomp of Nature! What their balmy meads,
Their powerful herbs, and *Ceres* void of pain!
By vagrant birds dispers'd, and wafting winds,
What their unplanted fruits! What the cool draughts,
Th' ambrosial food, rich gums, and spicy health,
Their forests yield! Their toiling insects, what
Their silky pride, and vegetable robes!
Ah! what avail their fatal treasure, hid
Deep in the bowels of the pitying earth,
Golconda's gems, and sad *Potosi*'s mines,
Where dwelt the gentlest children of the sun!
What all that *Afric*'s golden rivers roll,
Her odorous woods, and shining ivory stores!
Ill-fated race! the soft'ning arts of peace,
Whate'er the humanizing Muses teach;
The godlike wisdom of the temper'd breast;

Progressive truth, the patient force of thought;
Investigation calm, whose silent powers
Command the world; the Light that leads to Heaven;
Kind equal rule, the government of laws,
And all-protecting Freedom, which alone
Sustains the name and dignity of Man—
These are not theirs. The parent-sun himself
Seems o'er this world of slaves to tyrannize;
And, with oppressive ray, the roseat bloom
Of beauty blasting, gives the gloomy hue,
And feature gross: or worse, to ruthless deeds,
Mad jealousy, blind rage, and fell revenge,
Their fervid spirit fires. Love dwells not there;
The soft regards, the tenderness of life,
The heart-shed tear, th' ineffable delight
Of sweet humanity—these court the beam
Of milder climes; in selfish fierce desire,
And the wild fury of voluptuous sense,
There lost. The very brute-creation there
This rage partakes, and burns with horrid fire.
Lo! the green serpent, from his dark abode,
Which e'en Imagination fears to tread,
At noon forth-issuing, gathers up his train
In orbs immense; then, darting out anew,
Seeks the refreshing fount; by which diffus'd,
He throws his folds: and while, with threatning tongue,
And deathful jaws erect, the monster curls
His flaming crest, all other thirst, appall'd,
Or shivering flies, or check'd at distance stands,
Nor dares approach. But still more direful he,
The small close-lurking minister of fate,

Whose high-concocted venom thro' the veins
A rapid lightning darts, arresting swift
The vital current. Form'd to humble Man,
This child of vengeful Nature! there, sublim'd
To fearless lust of blood, the savage race
Roam, licens'd by the shading hour of guilt,
And foul misdeed, when the pure day has shut
His sacred eye. The tiger darting fierce,
Impetuous on the prey his glance has doom'd:
The lively-shining leopard, speckled o'er
With many a spot, the beauty of the waste;
And, scorning all the taming arts of Man,
The keen hyena, fellest of the fell.
These, rushing from th' inhospitable woods
Of *Mauritania*, or the tufted isles,
That verdant rise amid the *Libyan* wild,
Innumerous glare around their shaggy king,
Majestic, stalking o'er the printed sand;
And, with imperious and repeated roars,
Demand their fated food. The fearful flocks
Crowd near the guardian swain; the nobler herds,
Where round their lordly bull, in rural ease,
They ruminating lie, with horror hear
The coming rage. Th' awaken'd village starts;
And to her flutt'ring breast the mother strains
Her thoughtless infant. From the *Pirate*'s den,
Or stern *Morocco*'s tyrant fang escap'd,
The wretch half-wishes for his bonds again:
While, uproar all, the wilderness resounds,
From *Atlas* eastward to the frighted *Nile*.
Unhappy he! who from the first of joys,
Society, cut off, is left alone

Amid this world of death. Day after day,
Sad on the jutting eminence he sits,
And views the main that ever toils below;
Still fondly forming in the farthest verge,
Where the round æther mixes with the wave,
Ships, dim-discover'd, dropping from the clouds;
At evening, to the setting sun he turns
A mournful eye, and down his dying heart
Sinks helpless; while the wonted roar is up,
And hiss continual thro' the tedious night.
Yet here, ev'n here, into these black abodes
Of monsters, unappall'd from stooping *Rome*,
And guilty *Cæsar*, Liberty retir'd,
Her Cato following thro' *Numidian* wilds:
Disdainful of *Campania*'s gentle plains,
And all the green delights *Ausonia* pours;
When for them she must bend the servile knee,
And fawning take the splendid robber's boon.
Nor stop the terrors of these regions here.
Commission'd demons oft, angels of wrath,
Let loose the raging elements. Breath'd hot,
From all the boundless furnace of the sky,
And the wide glittering waste of burning sand,
A suffocating wind the pilgrim smites
With instant death. Patient of thirst and toil,
Son of the desart! even the camel feels,
Shot thro' his wither'd heart, the fiery blast.
Or from the black-red æther, bursting broad,
Sallies the sudden whirlwind. Straight the sands,
Commov'd around, in gathering eddies play:
Nearer and nearer still they dark'ning come;
Till, with the general all-involving storm

Swept up, the whole continuous wilds arise;
And by their noonday fount dejected thrown,
Or sunk at night in sad disastrous sleep,
Beneath descending hills, the caravan
Is buried deep. In *Cairo*'s crowded streets,
Th' impatient merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
And *Mecca* saddens at the long delay.
But chief at sea, whose every flexile wave
Obeys the blast, th' aërial tumult swells.
In the dread ocean, undulating wide,
Beneath the radiant line that girts the globe,
The circling [1] Typhon, whirl'd from point to point,
Exhausting all the rage of all the sky,
And dire Ecnephia reign. Amid the heavens,
Falsely serene, deep in a cloudy [2] speck
Compress'd, the mighty tempest brooding dwells:
Of no regard save to the skilful eye,
Fiery and foul, the small prognostic hangs
Aloft, or on the promontory's brow
Musters its force. A faint deceitful calm,
A flutt'ring gale, the demon sends before,
To tempt the spreading sail. Then down at once,
Precipitant, descends a mingled mass
Of roaring winds, and flame, and rushing floods.
In wild amazement fix'd the sailor stands.
Art is too slow. By rapid fate oppress'd,
His broad-wing'd vessel drinks the whelming tide,
Hid in the bosom of the black abyss.

[1] *Typhon* and *Ecnephia*, names of particular storms or hurricanes known only between the tropics.

[2] Called by sailors the *Ox-Eye*, being in appearance at first no bigger.

With such mad seas the daring [1] Gama fought,
For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
Incessant, lab'ring round the stormy cape;
By bold ambition led, and bolder thirst
Of gold. For then from ancient gloom emerg'd
The rising world of trade: the *Genius*, then,
Of navigation, that, in hopeless sloth,
Had slumber'd on the vast Atlantic deep,
For idle ages, starting, heard at last
The [2] Lusitanian Prince, who, Heav'n-inspir'd,
To love of useful glory rous'd mankind,
And in unbounded commerce mix'd the world.
Increasing still the terrors of these storms,
His jaws horrific arm'd with threefold fate,
Here dwells the direful shark. Lur'd by the scent
Of steaming crowds, of rank disease, and death,
Behold! he rushing cuts the briny flood,
Swift as the gale can bear the ship along;
And, from the partners of that cruel trade,
Which spoils unhappy *Guinea* of her sons,
Demands his share of prey; demands themselves.
The stormy fates descend: one death involves
Tyrants and slaves; when straight, their mangled [limbs
Crashing at once, he dyes the purple seas
With gore, and riots in the vengeful meal.
When o'er this world, by equinoctial rains

[1] Vasco de Gama, the first who sailed round *Africa*, by the *Cape of Good Hope*, to the *East-Indies*.

[2] Don Henry, third son to *John* the first, king of *Portugal*. His strong genius to the discovery of new countries was the chief source of all the modern improvements in navigation.

Flooded immense, looks out the joyless sun,
And draws the copious steam from swampy fens,
Where putrefaction into life ferments,
And breathes destructive myriads; or from woods,
Impenetrable shades, recesses foul,
In vapours rank and blue corruption wrapt,
Whose gloomy horrors yet no desperate foot
Has ever dar'd to pierce; then, wasteful, forth
Walks the dire *Power* of pestilent disease.
A thousand hideous fiends her course attend,
Sick Nature blasting, and to heartless woe,
And feeble desolation, casting down
The towering hopes and all the pride of Man.
Such as, of late, at *Carthagena* quench'd
The British fire. You, gallant Vernon, saw
The miserable scene; you, pitying, saw
To infant-weakness sunk the warrior's arm:
Saw the deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,
The lip pale-quiver'ing, and the beamless eye
No more with ardour bright: you heard the groans
Of agonizing ships, from shore to shore;
Heard, nightly plung'd amid the sullen waves,
The frequent corse; while on each other fix'd,
In sad presage, the blank assistants seem'd,
Silent, to ask whom Fate would next demand.
What need I mention those inclement skies,
Where, frequent o'er the sick'ning city, Plague,
The fiercest child of Nemesis divine,
Descends! [1] From *Ethiopia*'s poisoned woods,

[1] These are the causes supposed to be the first origin of the *Plague*, in *Dr. Mead*'s elegant book on that subject.

From stifled *Cairo*'s filth, and fetid fields,
With locust-armies putrefying heap'd,
This great destroyer sprung. Her awful rage
The brutes escape: Man is her destin'd prey.
Intemperate Man! and o'er his guilty domes
She draws a close incumbent cloud of death,
Uninterrupted by the living winds,
Forbid to blow a wholesome breeze, and stain'd
With many a mixture by the sun, suffus'd,
Of angry aspect. Princely Wisdom, then,
Dejects his watchful eye; and from the hand
Of feeble Justice, ineffectual, drop
The sword and balance: mute the voice of Joy,
And hush'd the clamour of the busy world.
Empty the streets, with uncouth verdure clad;
Into the worst of desarts sudden turn'd
The cheerful haunt of men: unless escap'd
From the doom'd house, where matchless Horror
reigns,
Shut up by barbarous Fear, the smitten wretch,
With frenzy wild, breaks loose; and, loud to heaven
Screaming, the dreadful policy arraigns,
Inhuman, and unwise. The sullen door,
Yet uninfected, on its cautious hinge
Fearing to turn, abhors society:
Dependants, friends, relations, Love himself,
Savag'd by woe, forget the tender tie,
The sweet engagement of the feeling heart.
But vain their selfish care: the circling sky,
The wide enlivening air is full of fate;
And, struck by turns, in solitary pangs
They fall, unblest, untended, and unmourn'd.

Thus o'er the prostrate city black Despair
Extends her raven wing; while, to complete
The scene of desolation, stretch'd around,
The grim guards stand, denying all retreat;
And give the flying wretch a better death.
Much yet remains unsung: the rage intense
Of brazen-vaulted skies, of iron fields,
Where drought and famine starve the blasted year:
Fir'd by the torch of noon to tenfold rage,
Th' infuriate hill that shoots the pillar'd flame;
And, rous'd within the subterranean world,
Th' expanding earthquake, that resistless shakes
Aspiring cities from their solid base,
And buries mountains in the flaming gulf.
But 'tis enough; return, my vagrant Muse!
A nearer scene of horror calls thee home.
Behold, slow-settling o'er the lurid grove,
Unusual darkness broods; and growing gains
The full possession of the sky, surcharg'd
With wrathful vapor, from the secret beds,
Where sleep the mineral generations drawn.
Thence nitre, sulphur, and the fiery spume
Of fat bitumen, steaming on the day,
With various-tinctur'd trains of latent flame
Pollute the sky, and in yon baleful cloud,
A redd'ning gloom, a magazine of fate,
Ferment; till, by the touch ethereal rous'd,
The dash of clouds, or irritating war
Of fighting winds, while all is calm below,
They furious spring. A boding silence reigns,
Dread thro' the dun expanse; save the dull sound
That from the mountain, previous to the storm,

Rolls o'er the mutt'ring earth, disturbs the flood,
And shakes the forest-leaf without a breath.
Prone to the lowest vale th' aërial tribes
Descend: the tempest-loving raven scarce
Dares wing the dubious dusk. In rueful gaze
The cattle stand, and on the scowling heavens
Cast a deploring eye; by Man forsook,
Who to the crowded cottage hies him fast,
Or seeks the shelter of the downward cave.
'Tis listening fear, and dumb amazement all:
When to the startled eye the sudden glance
Appears far south, eruptive thro' the cloud;
And following slower, in explosion vast,
The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
The tempest growls; but as it nearer comes,
And rolls its awful burden on the wind,
The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more
The noise astounds: till over-head a sheet
Of livid flame discloses wide, then shuts,
And opens wider; shuts and opens still
Expansive, wrapping æther in a blaze:
Follows the loosen'd, aggravated roar,
Enlarging, deepening, mingling; peal on peal
Crush'd horrible, convulsing heaven and earth.
Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain. Wide-rent, the clouds
Pour a whole flood; and yet, its flame unquench'd,
Th' unconquerable lightning struggles through,
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And fires the mountains with redoubled rage.
Black from the stroke, above, the smouldring pine

Stands a sad shatter'd trunk; and, stretch'd below,
A lifeless group the blasted cattle lie:
Here the soft flocks, with that same harmless look
They wore alive, and ruminating still
In fancy's eye; and there the frowning bull,
And ox half-rais'd. Struck on the castled cliff,
The venerable tower and spiry fane
Resign their aged pride. The gloomy woods
Start at the flash, and from their deep recess,
Wide-flaming out, their trembling inmates shake.
Amid *Carnarvon*'s mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar: with mighty crush,
Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
Of *Penmanmaur* heap'd hideous to the sky,
Tumble the smitten cliffs; and *Snowden*'s peak,
Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load.
Far-seen, the heights of heathy *Cheviot* blaze,
And *Thule* bellows thro' her utmost isles.

Guilt hears appall'd with deeply troubled thought;
And yet not always on the guilty head
Descends the fated flash. Young Celadon
And his Amelia were a matchless pair;
With equal virtue form'd, and equal grace,
The same, distinguish'd by their sex alone:
Hers the mild lustre of the blooming morn,
And his the radiance of the risen day.

They lov'd: but such their guileless passion was,
As in the dawn of time inform'd the heart
Of innocence, and undissembling truth.
'Twas friendship heighten'd by the mutual wish,
Th' enchanting hope, and sympathetic glow,
Beam'd from the mutual eye. Devoting all

To love, each was to each a dearer self,
Supremely happy in th' awaken'd power
Of giving joy. Alone, amid the shades,
Still in harmonious intercourse they liv'd
The rural day, and talk'd the flowing heart,
Or sigh'd, and look'd unutterable things.
So pass'd their life, a clear united stream,
By care unruffled; till, in evil hour,
The tempest caught them on the tender walk,
Heedless how far and where its mazes stray'd,
While, with each other blest, creative love
Still bade eternal *Eden* smile around.
Presaging instant fate, her bosom heav'd
Unwonted sighs, and stealing oft a look
Of the big gloom on Celadon her eye
Fell tearful, wetting her disordered cheek.
In vain assuring love, and confidence
In Heav'n, repress'd her fear; it grew, and shook
Her frame near dissolution. He perceiv'd
Th' unequal conflict, and as angels look
On dying saints, his eyes compassion shed,
With love illumin'd high. "Fear not" he said,
" Sweet innocence! thou stranger to offence,
" And inward storm! He, who yon skies involves
" In frowns of darkness, ever smiles on thee
" With kind regard. O'er thee the secret shaft
" That wastes at midnight, or th' undreaded hour
" Of noon, flies harmless: and that very voice
" Which thunders terror thro' the guilty heart,
" With tongues of seraphs whispers peace to thine.
" 'Tis safety to be near thee, sure, and thus
" To clasp perfection!" From his void embrace,

Mysterious Heaven! that moment, to the ground,
A blacken'd corse, was struck the beauteous maid.
But who can paint the lover, as he stood,
Pierc'd by severe amazement, hating life,
Speechless, and fix'd in all the death of woe!
So, faint resemblance! on the marble-tomb
The well-dissembled mourner stooping stands,
For ever silent, and for ever sad.

As from the face of heav'n the shatter'd clouds
Tumultuous rove, th' interminable sky
Sublimer swells, and o'er the world expands
A purer azure. Nature, from the storm,
Shines out afresh; and thro' the lighten'd air
A higher lustre and a clearer calm,
Diffusive, tremble; while, as if in sign
Of danger past, a glitt'ring robe of joy,
Set off abundant by the yellow ray,
Invests the fields; and nature smiles reviv'd.

'Tis beauty all, and grateful song around,
Join'd to the low of kine, and numerous bleat
Of flocks thick-nibbling thro' the clover'd vale.
And shall the hymn be marr'd by thankless Man,
Most-favour'd; who with voice articulate
Should lead the chorus of this lower world!
Shall he, so soon forgetful of the hand
That hush'd the thunder, and serenes the sky,
Extinguish'd feel that spark the tempest wak'd,
That sense of powers exceeding far his own,
Ere yet his feeble heart has lost its fears!

Cheer'd by the milder beam, the sprightly youth
Speeds to the well-known pool, whose crystal depth
A sandy bottom shews. A while he stands,

Gazing th' inverted landscape, half-afraid
To meditate the blue profound below;
Then plunges headlong down the circling flood.
His ebon tresses and his rosy cheek
Instant emerge; and thro' the obedient wave,
At each short breathing by his lip repell'd,
With arms and legs according well, he makes,
As humour leads, an easy-winding path,
While from his polish'd sides a dewy light
Effuses on the pleas'd spectators round.
This is the purest exercise of health,
The kind refresher of the summer-heats;
Nor, when cold Winter keens the bright'ning flood,
Would I, weak-shivering, linger on the brink.
Thus life redoubles, and is oft preserv'd,
By the bold swimmer, in the swift illapse
Of accident disastrous. Hence the limbs
Knit into force; and the same *Roman* arm
That rose victorious o'er the conquer'd earth,
First learn'd, while tender, to subdue the wave.
Ev'n from the body's purity the mind
Receives a secret sympathetic aid.
Close in the covert of an hazel copse,
Where, winded into pleasing solitudes,
Runs out the rambling dale, young Damon sat,
Pensive, and pierc'd with love's delightful pangs.
There to the stream that down the distant rocks
Hoarse-murm'ring fell, and plaintive breeze, that play'd
Among the bending willows, falsely he
Of Musidora's cruelty complain'd.
She felt his flame; but deep within her breast,

In bashful coyness, or in maiden pride,
The soft return conceal'd; save when it stole
In side-long glances from her downcast eye,
Or from her swelling soul in stifled sighs.
Touch'd by the scene, no stranger to his vows,
He fram'd a melting lay, to try her heart;
And, if an infant passion struggled there,
To call that passion forth. Thrice happy swain!
A lucky chance, that oft decides the fate
Of mighty monarchs, then decided thine.
For, lo! conducted by the laughing Loves,
This cool retreat his Musidora sought:
Warm in her cheek the sultry season glow'd
And, rob'd in loose array, she came to bathe
Her fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.
What shall he do! In sweet confusion lost,
And dubious flutt'rings, he a while remain'd:
A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,
A delicate refinement, known to few,
Perplex'd his breast, and urg'd him to retire:
But love forbade. Ye prudes in virtue, say,
Say, ye severest, what would you have done!
Meantime, this fairer nymph than ever blest
Arcadian stream, with timid eye around
The banks surveying, stripp'd her beauteous limbs,
To taste the lucid coolness of the flood.
Ah, then! not *Paris* on the piny top
Of *Ida* panted stronger, when aside
The rival-goddesses the veil divine
Cast unconfin'd, and gave him all their charms,
Than, Damon, thou; as from the snowy leg,
And slender foot, th' inverted silk she drew;

As the soft touch dissolv'd the virgin zone;
And, thro' the parting robe, th' alternate breast,
With youth wild-throbbing, on thy lawless gaze
In full luxuriance rose. But, desperate youth,
How durst thou risk the soul-distracting view;
As from her naked limbs, of glowing white,
Harmonious swell'd by Nature's finest hand,
In folds loose-floating fell the fainter lawn;
And fair-expos'd she stood, shrunk from herself,
With fancy blushing, at the doubtful breeze
Alarm'd, and starting like the fearful fawn!
Then to the flood she rush'd; the parted flood
Its lovely guest with closing waves receiv'd;
And every beauty softening, every grace
Flushing anew, a mellow lustre shed:
As shines the lily thro' the crystal mild;
Or as the rose amid the morning-dew,
Fresh from *Aurora*'s hand, more sweetly glows.
While thus she wanton'd, now beneath the wave
But ill-conceal'd; and now with streaming locks,
That half-embrac'd her in a humid veil,
Rising again, the latent Damon drew
Such madd'ning draughts of beauty to the soul,
As for a while o'erwhelm'd his raptur'd thought
With luxury too daring. Check'd, at last,
By love's respectful modesty, he deem'd
The theft profane, if aught profane to love
Can e'er be deem'd; and, struggling, from the shade
With headlong hurry fled: but first these lines,
Trac'd by his ready pencil, on the bank
With trembling hand he threw: "Bathe on, my fair!
" Yet unbeheld, save by the sacred eye

" Of faithful love. I go to guard thy haunt,
" To keep from thy recess each vagrant foot,
" And each licentious eye." With wild surprise,
As if to marble struck, devoid of sense,
A stupid moment motionless she stood:
So stands the [1] statue that enchants the world;
So bending tries to veil the matchless boast,
The mingled beauties of exulting *Greece.*
Recov'ring, swift she flew to find those robes
Which blissful *Eden* knew not; and, array'd
In careless haste, th' alarming paper snatch'd.
But, when her Damon's well-known hand she saw,
Her terrors vanish'd, and a softer train
Of mixt emotions, hard to be describ'd,
Her sudden bosom seiz'd: shame void of guilt,
The charming blush of innocence, esteem
And admiration of her lover's flame,
By modesty exalted; even a sense
Of self-approving beauty stole across
Her busy thought. At length, a tender calm
Hush'd by degrees the tumult of her soul;
And on the spreading beech, that o'er the stream
Incumbent hung, she with the sylvan pen
Of rural lovers this confession carv'd,
Which soon her Damon kiss'd with weeping joy:
" Dear Youth! sole judge of what these verses mean,
" By fortune too much favour'd, but by love,
" Alas! not favour'd less, be still as now
" Discreet: the time may come you need not fly."
The sun has lost his rage: his downward orb

[1] The Venus of *Medici.*

Shoots nothing now but animating warmth,
And vital lustre: that with various ray,
Lights up the clouds, those beauteous robes of heaven,
Incessant roll'd into romantic shapes,
The dream of waking fancy! Broad below,
Cover'd with rip'ning fruits, and swelling fast
Into the perfect year, the pregnant earth
And all her tribes rejoice. Now the soft hour
Of walking comes: for him who lonely loves
To seek the distant hills, and there converse
With Nature; there to harmonize his heart,
And in pathetic song to breathe around
The harmony to others. Social friends,
Attun'd to happy unison of soul;
To whose exalting eye a fairer world,
Of which the vulgar never had a glimpse,
Displays its charms; whose minds are richly fraught
With philosophic stores, superior light;
And in whose breast, enthusiastic, burns
Virtue, the sons of int'rest deem romance,
Now call'd abroad enjoy the falling day.
Now to the verdant *Portico* of woods,
To Nature's vast *Lyceum*, forth they walk;
By that kind *School* where no proud master reigns,
The full free converse of the friendly heart,
Improving and improv'd. Now from the world,
Sacred to sweet retirement, lovers steal,
And pour their souls in transport, which the Sire
Of Love approving hears, and *calls it good.*
Which way, Amanda, shall we bend our course?
The choice perplexes; wherefore should we chuse?
All is the same with thee. Say, shall we wind

Along the streams! or walk the smiling mead!
Or court the forest-glades! or wander wild
Among the waving harvests! or ascend,
While radiant summer opens all its pride,
Thy hill, delightful [1] *Shene!* Here let us sweep
The boundless landscape: now the raptur'd eye,
Exulting swift, to huge Augusta send;
Now to the [2] *Sister-Hills* that skirt her plain,
To lofty *Harrow* now, and now to where
Majestic *Windsor* lifts his princely brow.
In lovely contrast to this glorious view,
Calmly magnificent, then will we turn
To where the silver Thames first rural grows.
There let the feasted eye unwearied stray:
Luxurious, there, rove thro' the pendant woods
That nodding hang o'er Harrington's retreat;
And, stooping thence to *Ham*'s embowering walks,
Beneath whose shades, in spotless peace retir'd,
With Her the pleasing partner of his heart,
The worthy Queensb'ry yet laments his Gay,
And polish'd Cornbury woos the willing Muse,
Slow let us trace the matchless vale of Thames;
Fair-winding up to where the Muses haunt
In *Twit'nam*'s bowers, and for their Pope implore
The healing God [3]; to royal *Hampton*'s pile,
To *Clermont*'s terrass'd height, and *Esher*'s groves,
Where in the sweetest solitude, embrac'd

[1] The old name of *Richmond*, signifying in Saxon *Shining*, or *Splendor*.

[2] *Highgate* and *Hamstead*.

[3] In his last sickness.

By the soft windings of the silent *Mole*,
From courts and senates Pelham finds repose.
Enchanting vale! beyond whate'er the Muse
Has of *Achaia* or *Hesperia* sung!
O vale of bliss! O softly-swelling hills!
On which the *power of Cultivation* lies,
And joys to see the wonders of his toil.
Heav'ns! what a goodly prospect spreads around,
Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,
And glitt'ring towns, and gilded streams, till all
The stretching landscape into smoke decays!
Happy Britannia! where the Queen of Arts,
Inspiring vigor, Liberty abroad
Walks, unconfin'd, e'en to thy farthest cots,
And scatters plenty with unsparing hand.
Rich is thy soil, and merciful thy clime;
Thy streams unfalling in the summer's drought;
Unmatch'd thy guardian-oaks; thy valleys float
With golden waves: and on thy mountains flocks
Bleat numberless; while roving round their sides,
Bellow the black'ning herds in lusty droves.
Beneath, thy meadows glow, and rise unquell'd
Against the mower's scythe. On every hand,
Thy villas shine. Thy country teems with wealth;
And property assures it to the swain,
Pleas'd, and unwearied, in his guarded toil.
Full are thy cities with the sons of Art;
And Trade and Joy, in every busy street,
Mingling are heard: e'en Drudgery himself,
As at the car he sweats, or dusty hews
The palace-stone, looks gay. Thy crowded ports,
Where rising masts an endless prospect yield,

With labour burn, and echo to the shouts
Of hurried sailor, as he hearty waves
His last adieu, and, loos'ning every sheet,
Resigns the spreading vessel to the wind.
Bold, firm, and graceful, are thy generous youth;
By hardship sinew'd, and by danger fir'd,
Scatt'ring the nations where they go; and first
Or on the listed plain, or wintry seas.
Mild are thy glories too, as o'er the plans
Of thriving peace thy thoughtful sires preside;
In genius, and substantial learning, high;
For every virtue, every worth, renown'd;
Sincere, plain-hearted, hospitable, kind;
Yet like the must'ring thunder when provok'd,
The dread of tyrants, and the sole resource
Of those that under grim Oppression groan.
Thy sons of glory many! Alfred thine,
In whom the splendor of heroic war,
And more heroic peace, when govern'd well,
Combine; whose hallow'd name the Virtues saint,
And *his own* Muses love; the best of *Kings!*
With him thy Edwards and thy Henrys shine,
Names dear to fame; the first who deep impress'd
On haughty *Gaul* the terror of thy arms,
That awes her genius still. In *Statesmen* thou,
And *Patriots* fertile. Thine a steady More,
Who, with a generous tho' mistaken zeal,
Withstood a brutal tyrant's useful rage,
Like Cato firm, like Aristides just,
Like rigid Cincinnatus nobly poor.
A dauntless soul, erect, who smil'd on death.
Frugal, and wise, a Walsingham is thine;

A Drake, who made thee mistress of the deep,
And bore thy name in thunder round the world.
Then flam'd thy spirit high: but who can speak
The numerous worthies of the Maiden Reign!
In Raleigh mark their every glory mix'd,
Raleigh, the scourge of *Spain!* whose breast with all
The sage, the patriot, and the hero, burn'd.
Nor sunk his vigour, when a coward reign
The warrior fetter'd, and at last resign'd,
To glut the vengeance of a vanquish'd foe.
Then, active still and unrestrain'd, his mind
Explor'd the vast extent of ages past,
And with his prison-hours enrich'd the world;
Yet found no times, in all the long research,
So glorious, or so base, as those he prov'd,
In which he conquer'd, and in which he bled.
Nor can the Muse the gallant Sidney pass,
The plume of war! with early laurels crown'd,
The lover's myrtle, and the poet's bay.
A Hampden too is thine, illustrious land!
Wise, strenuous, firm, of unsubmitting soul,
Who stem'd the torrent of a downward age,
To slavery prone, and bade thee rise again,
In all thy native pomp of freedom bold.
Bright, at his call, thy age of *Men* effulg'd,
Of Men on whom late time a kindling eye
Shall turn, and tyrants tremble while they read.
Bring every sweetest flower, and let me strew
The grave where Russel lies; whose temper'd blood
With calmest cheerfulness for thee resign'd,
Stain'd the sad annals of a giddy reign;
Aiming at lawless power, tho' meanly sunk

In loose inglorious luxury. With him
His friend, the [1] British Cassius, fearless bled;
Of high determin'd spirit, roughly brave,
By ancient learning to th' enlighten'd love
Of ancient freedom warm'd. Fair thy renown
In awful *Sages* and in noble *Bards;*
Soon as the light of dawning Science spread
Her orient ray, and wak'd the Muses' song.
Thine is a Bacon, hapless in his choice,
Unfit to stand the civil storm of state,
And thro' the smooth barbarity of courts,
With firm but pliant virtue, forward still
To urge his course. Him for the studious shade
Kind Nature form'd, deep, comprehensive, clear,
Exact, and elegant; in one rich soul,
Plato, the Stagyrite, and Tully join'd.
The great deliverer he! who from the gloom
Of cloister'd monks, and jargon-teaching schools,
Led forth the true philosophy, there long
Held in the magic chain of words and forms,
And definitions void: he led her forth,
Daughter of Heaven! that, slow-ascending still,
Investigating sure the chain of things,
With radiant finger points to Heaven again.
The generous [2] Ashley thine, the friend of Man;
Who scann'd his nature with a brother's eye,
His weakness prompt to shade, to raise his aim,
To touch the finer movements of the mind,
And with the *moral beauty* charm the heart.

[1] Algernon Sidney.
[2] Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of *Shaftesbury*.

Why need I name thy Boyle, whose pious search
Amid the dark recesses of his works
The great Creator sought! and why thy Locke,
Who made the whole internal world his own!
Let Newton *pure Intelligence,* whom God
To mortals lent, to trace his boundless works
From laws sublimely simple, speak thy fame
In all philosophy. For lofty sense,
Creative fancy, and inspection keen
Thro' the deep windings of the human heart,
Is not wild Shakespeare thine and Nature's boast!
Is not each great, each amiable Muse
Of classic ages in thy Milton met!
A genius universal as his theme;
Astonishing as chaos, as the bloom
Of blowing Eden fair, as heaven sublime.
Nor shall my verse that elder bard forget,
The gentle Spencer, Fancy's pleasing son;
Who, like a copious river, pour'd his song
O'er all the mazes of enchanted ground:
Nor thee, his ancient master, laughing sage,
Chaucer, whose native manners-painting verse,
Well-moraliz'd, shines thro' the Gothic cloud
Of time and language o'er thy genius thrown.
May my song soften, as thy Daughters I,
Britannia, hail! for beauty is their own,
The feeling heart, simplicity of life,
And elegance, and taste: the faultless form,
Shap'd by the hand of Harmony; the cheek,
Where the live crimson, thro' the native white
Soft-shooting, o'er the face diffuses bloom,
And every nameless grace; the parted lip,

Like the red rose-bud moist with morning-dew,
Breathing delight; and, under flowing jet,
Or sunny ringlets, or of circling brown,
The neck slight-shaded, and the swelling breast;
The look resistless, piercing to the soul,
And by the soul inform'd, when drest in love
She sits high-smiling in the conscious eye.
Island of bliss! amid the subject seas,
That thunder round thy rocky coasts, set up,
At once the wonder, terror, and delight,
Of distant nations; whose remotest shores
Can soon be shaken by thy naval arm;
Not to be shook thyself, but all assaults
Baffling, as thy hoar cliffs the loud sea-wave.
O Thou! by whose almighty *Nod* the scale
Of empire rises, or alternate falls,
Send forth the saving Virtues round the land,
In bright patrol: white *Peace,* and social *Love;*
The tender-looking *Charity,* intent
On gentle deeds, and shedding tears thro' smiles;
Undaunted *Truth,* and *Dignity* of mind;
Courage compos'd, and keen; sound *Temperance,*
Healthful in heart and look; clear *Chastity,*
With blushes redd'ning as she moves along,
Disorder'd at the deep regard she draws;
Rough *Industry; Activity* untir'd,
With copious life inform'd, and all awake:
While, in the radiant front, superior shines
That first paternal virtue, *Public Zeal,*
Who throws o'er all an equal wide survey,
And, ever musing on the common weal,
Still labours glorious with some great design.

Low walks the sun, and broadens by degrees,
Just o'er the verge of day. The shifting clouds
Assembled gay, a richly-gorgeous train,
In all their pomp attend his setting throne.
Air, earth, and ocean smile immense. And now,
As if his weary chariot sought the bowers
Of *Amphitrite,* and her tending Nymphs,
(So *Grecian* fable sung) he dips his orb;
Now half-immers'd; and now a golden curve
Gives one bright glance, then total disappears.
For ever running, an enchanted round,
Passes the day, deceitful, vain, and void;
As fleets the vision o'er the formful brain,
This moment hurrying wild th' impassion'd soul,
The next in nothing lost. 'Tis so to him,
The dreamer of this earth, an idle blank:
A sight of horror to the cruel wretch,
Who all day long in sordid pleasure roll'd,
Himself an useless load, has squander'd vile,
Upon his scoundrel train, what might have cheer'd
A drooping family of modest worth.
But to the generous still-improving mind,
That gives the hopeless heart to sing for joy,
Diffusing kind beneficence around,
Boastless, as now descends the silent dew;
To him the long review of order'd life
Is inward rapture, only to be felt.
Confess'd from yonder slow-extinguish'd clouds,
All æther softening, sober *Evening* takes
Her wonted station in the middle air;
A thousand *shadows* at her beck. First *this*
She sends on earth; then *that* of deeper dye

Steals soft behind; and then a *deeper* still,
In circle following circle, gathers round,
To close the face of things. A fresher gale
Begins to wave the wood, and stir the stream,
Sweeping with shadowy gust the fields of corn;
While the quail clamours for his running mate.
Wide o'er the thistly lawn, as swells the breeze,
A whit'ning shower of vegetable down
Amusive floats. The kind impartial care
Of Nature nought disdains: thoughtful to feed
Her lowest sons, and clothe the coming year,
From field to field the feather'd seeds she wings.
His folded flock secure, the shepherd home
Hies, merry-hearted; and by turns relieves
The ruddy milk-maid of her brimming pail;
The beauty whom perhaps his witless heart,
Unknowing what the joy-mixt anguish means,
Sincerely loves, by that best language shewn
Of cordial glances, and obliging deeds.
Onward they pass, o'er many a panting height,
And valley sunk, and unfrequented; where
At fall of eve the fairy people throng,
In various game and revelry to pass
The summer-night, as village-stories tell.
But far about they wander from the grave
Of him, whom his ungentle fortune urg'd
Against his own sad breast to lift the hand
Of impious Violence. The lonely tower
Is also shun'd; whose mournful chambers hold,
So night-struck Fancy dreams, the yelling ghost.
Among the crooked lanes, on every hedge,
The glow-worm lights his gem; and, thro' the dark,

A moving radiance twinkles. *Evening* yields
The world to *Night;* not in her winter-robe
Of massy Stygian woof, but loose array'd
In mantle dun. A faint erroneous ray,
Glanc'd from th' imperfect surfaces of things,
Flings half an image on the straining eye;
While wav'ring woods, and villages, and streams,
And rocks, and mountain-tops, that long retain'd
Th' ascending gleam, are all one swimming scene,
Uncertain if beheld. Sudden to heaven
Thence weary Vision turns; where, leading soft
The silent hours of love, with purest ray
Sweet *Venus* shines; and from her genial rise,
When day-light sickens till it springs afresh,
Unrival'd reigns, the fairest lamp of night:
As thus th' effulgence tremulous I drink,
With cherish'd gaze, the lambent lightnings shoot
Across the sky; or horizontal dart
In wondrous shapes: by fearful murm'ring crowds
Portentous deem'd. Amid the radiant orbs,
That more than deck, that animate the sky,
The life-infusing suns of other worlds;
Lo! from the dread immensity of space
Returning with accelerated course,
The rushing comet to the sun descends;
And as he sinks below the shading earth,
With awful train projected o'er the heavens,
The guilty nations tremble. But above
Those superstitious horrors that enslave
The fond sequacious herd, to mystic faith
And blind amazement prone, th' enlighten'd few,
Whose godlike minds Philosophy exalts,

The glorious stranger hail. They feel a joy
Divinely great; they in their powers exult,
That wondrous force of thought, which mounting spurns
This dusky spot, and measures all the sky;
While, from his far excursion thro' the wilds
Of barren æther, faithful to his time,
They see the blazing wonder rise anew,
In seeming terror clad, but kindly bent
To work the will of all-sustaining Love:
From his huge vapoury train perhaps to shake
Reviving moisture on the numerous orbs,
Thro' which his long ellipsis winds; perhaps
To lend new fuel to declining suns,
To light up worlds, and feed th' eternal fire.
With thee, serene Philosophy! with thee,
And thy bright garland, let me crown my song!
Effusive source of evidence, and truth!
A lustre shedding o'er th' ennobled mind,
Stronger than summer-noon; and pure as that,
Whose mild vibrations sooth the parted soul,
New to the dawning of celestial day.
Hence thro' her nourish'd powers, enlarg'd by thee,
She springs aloft, with elevated pride,
Above the tangling mass of low desires,
That bind the flutt'ring crowd; and, angel-wing'd,
The heights of science and of virtue gains,
Where all is calm and clear; with Nature round,
Or in the starry regions, or th' abyss,
To Reason's and to Fancy's eye display'd:
The *First* up-tracing, from the dreary void,
The chain of causes and effects to Him,

The world-producing Essence, who alone
Possesses being; while the *Last* receives
The whole magnificence of heaven and earth,
And every beauty, delicate or bold,
Obvious or more remote, with livelier sense,
Diffusive painted on the rapid mind.
Tutor'd by thee, hence Poetry exalts
Her voice to ages; and informs the page
With music, image, sentiment, and thought,
Never to die! the treasure of mankind!
Their highest honour, and their truest joy!
Without thee, what were unenlightened Man!
A savage roaming thro' the woods and wilds
In quest of prey; and with th' unfashion'd fur
Rough clad; devoid of every finer art,
And elegance of life. Nor happiness
Domestic, mix'd of tenderness and care,
Nor moral excellence, nor social bliss,
Nor guardian law, were his; nor various skill
To turn the furrow, or to guide the tool
Mechanic; nor the heaven-conducted prow
Of navigation bold, that, fearless, braves
The burning line, or dares the wintry pole,
Mother severe of infinite delights!
Nothing, save rapine, indolence, and guile,
And woes on woes, a still-revolving train!
Whose horrid circle had made human life
Than non-existence worse: but, taught by thee,
Ours are the plans of policy and peace;
To live like brothers, and, conjunctive all,
Embellish life. While thus laborious crowds
Ply the tough oar, Philosophy directs

The ruling helm; or, like the liberal breath
Of potent heaven, invisible, the sail
Swells out, and bears th' inferior world along.
Nor to this evanescent speck of earth
Poorly confin'd, the radiant tracts on high
Are her exalted range, intent to gaze
Creation thro'; and, from that full complex
Of never-ending wonders, to conceive
Of the sole Being right, who *spoke the word,*
And Nature mov'd compleat. With inward view,
Thence on th' ideal kingdom swift she turns
Her eye; and instant, at her powerful glance,
Th' obedient phantoms vanish or appear;
Compound, divide, and into order shift,
Each to his rank, from plain perception up
To the fair forms of Fancy's fleeting train:
To reason then, deducing truth from truth;
And notion quite abstract; where first begins
The world of spirits, action all, and life
Unfetter'd, and unmix'd. But here the cloud,
So wills Eternal Providence, sits deep.
Enough for us to know that this dark state,
In wayward passions lost, and vain pursuits,
This infancy of being, cannot prove
The final issue of the works of God,
By boundless Love and perfect Wisdom form'd,
And ever rising with the rising mind.

AUTUMN.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Addressed to Mr. Onslow — A prospect of the fields ready for harvest — Reflections in praise of industry raised by that view—Reaping—A tale relative to it — A harvest storm—Shooting and hunting, their barbarity — A ludicrous account of fox-hunting — A view of an orchard — Wall-fruit — A vineyard—A description of fogs, frequent in the latter part of Autumn: whence a digression, inquiring into the rise of fountains and rivers—Birds of season considered, that now shift their habitation — The prodigious number of them that cover the northern and western isles of Scotland—Hence a view of the country — A prospect of the discoloured, fading woods—After a gentle dusky day, moon-light — Autumnal meteors—Morning: to which succeeds a calm, pure, sun-shiny day, such as usually shuts up the season——The harvest being gathered in, the country dissolved in joy—The whole concludes with a panegyric on a philosophical country life.

CROWN'D with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
Comes jovial on — the *Doric* reed once more,
Well pleas'd, I tune. Whate'er the Wintry frost,
Nitrous, prepar'd, the various-blossom'd Spring
Put in white promise forth, and Summer suns

Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,
Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.
Onslow! the Muse, ambitious of thy name,
To grace, inspire, and dignify her song,
Would from the *Public Voice* thy gentle ear
Awhile engage. Thy noble care she knows,
The patriot virtues that distend thy thought,
Spread on thy front, and in thy bosom glow;
While listening senates hang upon thy tongue,
Devolving thro' the maze of eloquence
A roll of periods sweeter than her song.
But she too pants for public virtue; she,
Tho' weak of power, yet strong in ardent will,
Whene'er her country rushes on her heart,
Assumes a bolder note, and fondly tries
To mix the patriot's with the poet's flame.
When the bright *Virgin* gives the beauteous days,
And *Libra* weighs in equal scales the year;
From heaven's high cope the fierce effulgence shook
Of parting Summer, a serener blue,
With golden light enliven'd, wide invests
The happy world. Attemper'd suns arise,
Sweet-beam'd, and shedding oft thro' lucid clouds
A pleasing calm; while, broad and brown, below
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
Rich, silent, deep, they stand; for not a gale
Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain;
A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow.
Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;
The clouds fly different; and the sudden sun
By fits effulgent gilds th' illumin'd field,

And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
A gaily-checker'd, heart-expanding view,
Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.
These are thy blessings, Industry! rough power!
Whom labour still attends, and sweat, and pain;
Yet the kind source of every gentle art,
And all the soft civility of life:
Raiser of human kind! by Nature cast,
Naked and helpless, out amid the woods
And wilds, to rude inclement elements;
With various seeds of art deep in the mind
Implanted, and profusely pour'd around
Materials infinite; but idle all.
Still unexerted, in th' unconscious breast,
Slept the lethargic powers; Corruption still,
Voracious, swallowed what the liberal hand
Of Bounty scatter'd o'er the savage year:
And still the sad barbarian, roving, mix'd
With beasts of prey; or, for his acorn-meal,
Fought the fierce tusky boar; a shivering wretch!
Aghast, and comfortless, when the bleak north,
With winter charg'd, let the mix'd tempest fly,
Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost:
Then to the shelter of the hut he fled;
And the wild season, sordid, pin'd away.
For home he had not; home is the resort
Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting and supported, polish'd friends,
And dear relations mingle into bliss.
But this the rugged savage never felt,
Ev'n desolate in crowds; and thus his days

Roll'd heavy, dark, and unenjoy'd along;
A waste of time! till Industry approach'd,
And rous'd him from his miserable sloth:
His faculties unfolded; pointed out,
Where lavish Nature the directing hand
Of Art demanded; shew'd him how to raise
His feeble force by the mechanic powers,
To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth,
On what to turn the piercing rage of fire,
On what the torrent, and the gather'd blast;
Gave the tall ancient forest to his ax:
Taught him to chip the wood, and hew the stone,
Till by degrees the finish'd fabric rose;
Tore from his limbs the blood-polluted fur,
And wrapt them in the woolly vestment warm,
Or bright in glossy silk, and flowing lawn;
With wholesome viands fill'd his table, pour'd
The generous glass around, inspir'd to wake
The life-refining soul of decent wit:
Nor stopp'd at barren bare necessity;
But still advancing bolder, led him on
To pomp, to pleasure, elegance, and grace;
And, breathing high ambition thro' his soul,
Set science, wisdom, glory, in his view,
And bade him be the *Lord* of all below.

Then gathering men their natural powers combin'd,
And form'd a *Public;* to the general good
Submitting, aiming, and conducting all.
For this the *Patriot-Council* met, the full,
The free, and fairly represented *Whole;*
For this they plann'd the holy guardian-laws,
Distinguish'd orders, animated arts,

And with joint force *Oppression* chaining, set
Imperial Justice at the helm; yet still
To them accountable: nor slavish dream'd
That toiling millions must resign their weal,
And all the honey of their search, to such
As for themselves alone themselves have rais'd.
Hence every form of cultivated life
In order set, protected, and inspir'd,
Into perfection wrought. Uniting all,
Society grew numerous, high, polite,
And happy. Nurse of art! the city rear'd
In beauteous pride her tower-encircled head;
And, stretching street on street, by thousands drew,
From twining woody haunts, or the tough yew
To bows strong-straining, her aspiring sons.
Then Commerce brought into the public walk
The busy merchant; the big warehouse built;
Rais'd the strong crane; chok'd up the loaded street
With foreign plenty; and thy stream, O Thames,
Large, gentle, deep, majestic, king of floods!
Chose for his grand resort. On either hand,
Like a long wintry forest, groves of masts
Shot up their spires; the bellying sheet between
Possess'd the breezy void; the sooty hulk
Steer'd sluggish on; the splendid barge along
Row'd, regular, to harmony; around,
The boat, light-skimming, stretch'd its oary wings;
While deep the various voice of fervent Toil
From bank to bank increas'd; whence ribb'd with oak,
To bear the British Thunder, black, and bold,
The roaring vessel rush'd into the main.

Then too the pillar'd dome, magnific, heav'd
Its ample roof; and Luxury within
Pour'd out her glittering stores: the canvas smooth,
With glowing life protuberant, to the view
Embodied rose; the statue seem'd to breathe,
And soften into flesh, beneath the touch
Of forming Art, imagination-flush'd.
All is the gift of Industry; whate'er
Exalts, embellishes, and renders life
Delightful. Pensive Winter, cheer'd by him,
Sits at the social fire, and happy hears
Th' excluded tempest idly rave along;
His harden'd fingers deck the gaudy Spring;
Without him Summer were an arid waste;
Nor to th' Autumnal months could thus transmit
Those full, mature, immeasurable stores,
That, waving round, recall my wandering song.
Soon as the morning trembles o'er the sky,
And, unperceiv'd, unfolds the spreadin day,
Before the ripened field the reapers stand,
In fair array; each by the lass he loves,
To bear the rougher part, and mitigate,
By nameless gentle offices, her toil.
At once they stoop and swell the lusty sheaves;
While thro' their cheerful band the rural talk,
The rural scandal, and the rural jest,
Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time,
And steal, unfelt, the sultry hours away.
Behind the master walks, builds up the shocks;
And, conscious, glancing oft on every side
His sated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.
The gleaners spread around, and here and there,

Spike after spike, their scanty harvest pick.
Be not too narrow, husbandmen! but fling
From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,
The liberal handful. Think, oh, grateful think!
How good the God of Harvest is to you;
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields;
While these unhappy partners of your kind
Wide-hover round you, like the fowls of heaven,
And ask their humble dole. The various turns
Of fortune ponder; that your sons may want
What now, with hard reluctance, faint, ye give.
The lovely young Lavinia once had friends;
And Fortune smil'd, deceitful, on her birth.
For in her helpless years depriv'd of all,
Of every stay, save Innocence and Heaven,
She, with her widow'd mother, feeble, old,
And poor, liv'd in a cottage, far retir'd
Among the windings of a woody vale;
By solitude and deep surrounding shades,
But more by bashful modesty, conceal'd.
Together thus they shunn'd the cruel scorn
Which Virtue, sunk to poverty, would meet
From giddy Passion and low-minded Pride:
Almost on Nature's common bounty fed;
Like the gay birds that sung them to repose,
Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.
Her form was fresher than the morning-rose,
When the dew wets its leaves; unstain'd and pure,
As is the lily, or the mountain snow.
The modest virtues mingled in her eyes,
Still on the ground dejected, darting all
Their humid beams into the blooming flowers:

Or when the mournful tale her mother told,
Of what her faithless fortune promis'd once,
Thrill'd in her thought, they, like the dewy star
Of evening, shone in tears. A native grace
Sat fair proportion'd on her polish'd limbs,
Veil'd in a simple robe, their best attire,
Beyond the pomp of dress; for loveliness
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.
Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self,
Recluse amid the close-embowering woods.
As in the hollow breast of *Appenine*,
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills,
A myrtle rises, far from human eye,
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild;
So flourish'd blooming, and unseen by all,
The sweet Lavinia; till, at length, compell'd
By strong Necessity's supreme command,
With smiling patience in her looks, she went
To glean Palemon's field. The pride of swains
Palemon was, the generous, and the rich;
Who led the rural life in all its joy
And elegance, such as *Arcadian* song
Transmits from ancient uncorrupted times,
When tyrant Custom had not shackled Man;
But free to follow Nature was the mode.
He then, his fancy with autumnal scenes
Amusing, chanc'd beside his reaper-train
To walk, when poor Lavinia drew his eye,
Unconscious of her power, and turning quick
With unaffected blushes from his gaze:
He saw her charming; but he saw not half

The charms her downcast modesty conceal'd.
That very moment love and chaste desire
Sprang in his bosom, to himself unknown;
For still the world prevail'd, and its dread laugh,
Which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn,
Should his heart own a gleaner in the field!
And thus in secret to his soul he sigh'd:
" What pity! that so delicate a form,
" By beauty kindled, where enlivening sense,
" And more than vulgar goodness, seem to dwell,
" Should be devoted to the rude embrace
" Of some indecent clown! She looks, methinks,
" Of old Acasto's line; and to my mind
" Recalls that patron of my happy life,
" From whom my liberal fortune took its rise;
" Now to the dust gone down; his houses, lands,
" And once fair-spreading family, dissolv'd.
" 'Tis said that in some lone obscure retreat,
" Urg'd by remembrance sad, and decent pride,
" Far from those scenes which knew their better days,
" His aged widow and his daughter live,
" Whom yet my fruitless search could never find.
" Romantic wish, would this the daughter were!"
When, strict enquiring, from herself he found
She was the same, the daughter of his friend,
Of bountiful Acasto, who can speak
The mingled passions that surpris'd his heart,
And thro' his nerves in shivering transport ran!
Then blaz'd his smother'd flame, avow'd and bold,
And as he view'd her, ardent, o'er and o'er,
Love, gratitude, and pity, wept at once.
Confus'd, and frightened at his sudden tears,

Her rising beauties flush'd a higher bloom,
As thus Palemon, passionate, and just,
Pour'd out the pious rapture of his soul:

" And art thou then Acasto's dear remains!—
" She, whom my restless gratitude has sought
" So long in vain! O heavens! the very same,
" The soften'd image of my noble friend,
" Alive his every feature, every look,
" More elegantly touch'd. Sweeter than spring,
" Thou sole surviving blossom from the root
" That nourish'd up my fortune! Say, ah where,
" In what sequester'd desart, hast thou drawn
" The kindest aspect of delighted Heaven!
" Into such beauty spread, and blown so fair;
" Tho' poverty's cold wind, and crushing rain,
" Beat keen, and heavy, on thy tender years!
" O let me now into a richer soil
" Transplant thee safe! where vernal suns, and showers,
" Diffuse their warmest, largest influence;
" And of my garden be the pride and joy!
" It ill befits thee, oh it ill befits
" Acasto's daughter, his, whose open stores,
" Tho' vast, were little to his ampler heart,
" The father of a country, thus to pick
" The very refuse of those harvest-fields,
" Which from his bounteous friendship I enjoy.
" Then throw that shameful pittance from thy hand,
" But ill apply'd to such a rugged task;
" The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine;
" If to the various blessings which thy house
" Has on me lavish'd, thou wilt add that bliss,

" That dearest bliss, the power of blessing thee! "
Here ceas'd the youth : yet still his speaking eye
Express'd the sacred triumph of his soul,
With conscious virtue, gratitude, and love,
Above the vulgar joy divinely rais'd.
Nor waited he reply. Won by the charm
Of goodness irresistible, and all
In sweet disorder lost, she blush'd consent.
The news immediate to her mother brought,
While, pierc'd with anxious thought, she pin'd away
The lonely moments for Lavinia's fate;
Amaz'd, and scarce believing what she heard,
Joy seiz'd her wither'd veins, and one bright gleam
Of setting life shone on her evening-hours :
Not less enraptur'd than the happy pair,
Who flourish'd long in tender bliss, and rear'd
A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,
And good, the grace of all the country round.
Defeating oft the labours of the year,
The sultry south collects a potent blast.
At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir
Their trembling tops; and a still murmur runs
Along the soft-inclining fields of corn :
But as th' aërial tempest fuller swells,
And in one mighty stream, invisible,
Immense, the whole excited atmosphere,
Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world;
Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours
A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves.
High-beat, the circling mountains eddy in,
From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,
And send it in a torrent down the vale.

Expos'd, and naked, to its utmost rage,
Thro' all the sea of harvest rolling round,
The billowy plain floats wide; nor can evade,
Tho' pliant to the blast, its seizing force;
Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff
Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain,
Swept from the black horizon, broad, descends
In one continuous flood. Still over head
The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still
The deluge deepens; till the fields around
Lie sunk, and flatted, in the sordid wave.
Sudden, the ditches swell; the meadows swim.
Red, from the hills, innumerable streams
Tumultuous roar: and high above its banks
The river lift, before whose rushing tide,
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages, and swains,
Roll mingled down; all that the winds had spar'd,
In one wild moment ruin'd, the big hopes,
And well-earn'd treasures of the painful year.
Fled to some eminence, the husbandman,
Helpless, beholds the miserable wreck
Driving along; his drowning ox at once
Descending, with his labours scatter'd round,
He sees; and instant o'er his shivering thought
Comes Winter unprovided, and a train
Of claimant children dear. Ye masters, then,
Be mindful of the rough laborious hand
That sinks you soft in elegance and ease;
Be mindful of those limbs, in russet clad,
Whose toil to yours is warmth, and graceful pride;
And, oh! be mindful of that sparing board,
Which covers yours with luxury profuse,

Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice!
Nor cruelly demand what the deep rains,
And all-involving winds have swept away.
Here the rude clamour of the sportsman's joy,
The gun fast-thundering, and the winded horn,
Would tempt the Muse to sing the *rural Game:*
How, in his mid-career, the spaniel struck,
Stiff, by the tainted gale, with open nose,
Outstretch'd, and finely sensible, *draws* full,
Fearful, and cautious, on the latent prey;
As in the sun the circling covey bask
Their varied plumes, and, watchful every way,
Thro' the rough stubble turn the secret eye.
Caught in the meshy snare, in vain they beat
Their idle wings, intangled more and more:
Nor on the surges of the boundless air,
Tho' borne triumphant, are they safe; the gun,
Glanc'd just, and sudden, from the fowler's eye,
O'ertakes their sounding pinions, and again,
Immediate, brings them from the towering wing,
Dead to the ground, or drives them wide-dispers'd,
Wounded, and wheeling various, down the wind.
These are not subjects for the peaceful Muse,
Nor will she stain with such her spotless song;
Then most delighted, when she social sees
The whole mix'd animal-creation round
Alive, and happy. 'Tis not joy to her,
This falsely-cheerful barbarous game of death;
This rage of pleasure, which the restless youth
Awakes, impatient, with the gleaming morn;
When beasts of prey retire, that all night long,
Urg'd by necessity, had rang'd the dark,

As if their conscious ravage shunn'd the light,
Asham'd. Not so the steady tyrant Man,
Who, with the thoughtless insolence of power
Inflam'd, beyond the most infuriate wrath
Of the worst monster that e'er roam'd the waste,
For sport alone pursues the cruel chace,
Amid the beamings of the gentle days.
Upbraid, ye ravening tribes, our wanton rage,
For hunger kindles you, and lawless want;
But lavish fed, in Nature's bounty roll'd,
To joy at anguish, and delight in blood,
Is what your horrid bosoms never knew.
Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare!
Scar'd from the corn, and now to some lone seat
Retir'd: the rushy fen; the ragged furze,
Stretch'd o'er the stony heath, the stubble chapt;
The thistly lawn; the thick entangled broom;
Of the same friendly hue, the wither'd fern:
The fallow ground laid open to the sun,
Concoctive; and the nodding sandy bank,
Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain-brook.
Vain is her best precaution; tho' she sits
Conceal'd, with folded ears; unsleeping eyes,
By Nature rais'd to take th' horizon in;
And head couch'd close betwixt her hairy feet,
In act to spring away. The scented dew
Betrays her early labyrinth; and deep,
In scatter'd sullen openings, far behind,
With every breeze she hears the coming storm.
But nearer, and more frequent, as it loads
The sighing gale, she springs amaz'd, and all
The savage soul of game is up at once:

The pack full-opening, various; the shrill horn,
Resounded from the hills; the neighing steed,
Wild for the chace; and the loud hunter's shout;
O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
Mix'd in mad tumult and discordant joy.
The stag, too, singled from the herd, where long
He rang'd the branching monarch of the shades,
Before the tempest drives. At first, in speed
He, sprightly, puts his faith; and, rous'd by fear,
Gives all his swift aërial soul to flight.
Against the breeze he darts, that way the more
To leave the lessening murderous cry behind.
Deception short! tho' fleeter than the winds
Blown o'er the keen-air'd mountain by the north,
He bursts the thickets, glances thro' the glades,
And plunges deep into the wildest wood;
If slow, yet sure, adhesive to the track
Hot-steaming, up behind him come again
Th' inhuman rout, and from the shady depth
Expel him, circling thro' his every shift.
He sweeps the forest oft; and sobbing sees
The glades, mild-opening to the golden day;
Where, in kind contest, with his butting friends
He wont to struggle, or his loves enjoy.
Oft in the full descending flood he tries
To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides;
Oft seeks the herd; the watchful herd, alarm'd,
With selfish care avoid a brother's woe.
What shall he do! his once so vivid nerves,
So full of buoyant spirit, now no more
Inspire the course; but fainting breathless toil,
Sick, seizes on his heart: he stands at bay;

And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
The big round tears run down his dappled face;
He groans in anguish; while the growling pack,
Blood-happy, hang at his fair jutting chest,
And mark his beauteous checker'd sides with gore.
Of this enough. But if the sylvan youth
Whose fervent blood boils into violence,
Must have the chace; behold, despising flight,
The rous'd-up lion, resolute, and slow,
Advancing full on the protended spear,
And coward-band, that circling wheel aloof.
Slunk from the cavern, and the troubled wood,
See the grim wolf; on him his shaggy foe
Vindictive fix, and let the ruffian die:
Or, growling horrid, as the brindled boar
Grins fell destruction, to the monster's heart
Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm.
These Britain knows not. Give, ye Britons, then
Your sportive fury, pityless, to pour
Loose on the nightly robber of the fold:
Him, from his craggy winding haunts unearth'd,
Let all the thunder of the chace pursue.
Throw the broad ditch behind you; o'er the hedge
High-bound, resistless; nor the deep morass
Refuse, but thro' the shaking wilderness
Pick your nice way; into the perilous flood
Bear fearless, of the raging instinct full;
And as you ride the torrent, to the banks
Your triumph sound sonorous, running round,
From rock to rock, in circling echos tost;
Then scale the mountains to their woody tops;
Rush down the dangerous steep; and o'er the lawn

In fancy swallowing up the space between,
Pour all your speed into the rapid game.
For happy he! who tops the wheeling chace;
Has every maze evolv'd, and every guile
Disclos'd; who knows the merits of the pack,
Who saw the villain seiz'd, and dying hard,
Without complaint, tho' by an hundred mouths
Relentless torn: O glorious he, beyond
His daring peers! when the retreating horn
Calls them to ghostly halls of grey renown,
With woodland honours grac'd, the fox's fur,
Depending decent from the roof, and spread
Round the drear walls, with antic figures fierce,
The stag's large front: he then is loudest heard,
When the night staggers with severer toils,
With feats Thessalian Centaurs never knew,
And their repeated wonders shake the dome.
But first the fuel'd chimney blazes wide;
The tankards foam; and the strong table groans
Beneath the smoking sirloin, stretch'd immense
From side to side; in which, with desperate knife,
They deep incision make, and talk the while
Of England's glory, ne'er to be defac'd,
While hence they borrow vigour: or amain
Into the pasty plung'd, at intervals,
If stomach keen can intervals allow,
Relating all the glories of the chace.
Then sated *Hunger* bids his brother *Thirst*
Produce the mighty bowl; the mighty bowl,
Swell'd high with fiery juice, steams liberal round
A potent gale, delicious as the breath
Of *Maia* to the love-sick shepherdess,

On violets diffus'd, while soft she hears
Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.
Nor wanting is the brown October, drawn,
Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat
Of thirty years; and now his honest front
Flames in the light refulgent, not afraid
Even with the vineyard's best produce to vie.
To cheat the thirsty moments, whist a while
Walks his dull round, beneath a cloud of smoke,
Wreath'd fragrant from the pipe; or the quick dice,
In thunder leaping from the box, awake
The sounding gammon: while romp-loving miss
Is haul'd about, in gallantry robust.
At last these puling idlenesses laid
Aside, frequent and full, the dry divan
Close in firm circle; and set, ardent, in
For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,
Nor sober shift, is to the puking wretch
Indulg'd apart; but earnest brimming bowls
Lave every soul, the table floating round,
And pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot.
Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,
Vociferous at once from twenty tongues,
Reels fast from theme to theme; from horses, hounds,
To church or mistress, politics or ghost,
In endless mazes, intricate, perplex'd.
Mean-time, with sudden interruption, loud,
Th' impatient catch bursts from the joyous heart:
That moment touch'd is every kindred soul;
And, opening in a full-mouth'd cry of joy,
The laugh, the slap, the jocund curse, go round;
While from their slumbers shook, the kennel'd hounds

Mix in the music of the day again.
As when the tempest, that has vex'd the deep
The dark night long, with fainter murmurs falls:
So gradual sinks their mirth. Their feeble tongues,
Unable to take up the cumbrous word,
Lie quite dissolv'd. Before their maudlin eyes,
Seen dim, and blue, the double tapers dance,
Like the sun wading thro' the misty sky.
Then, sliding soft, they drop. Confus'd above,
Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,
As if the table even itself was drunk,
Lie a wet broken scene; and wide, below,
Is heap'd the social slaughter: where astride
The *lubber Power* in filthy triumph sits,
Slumbrous, inclining still from side to side,
And steeps them drench'd in potent sleep till morn.
Perhaps some doctor, of tremendous paunch,
Awful and deep, a black abyss of drink,
Outlives them all; and from his bury'd flock
Retiring, full of rumination sad,
Laments the weakness of these latter times.
But if the rougher sex by this fierce sport
Is hurried wild, let not such horrid joy
E'er stain the bosom of the British Fair.
Far be the spirit of the chace from them!
Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill;
To spring the fence, to rein the prancing steed;
The cap, the whip, the masculine attire,
In which they roughen to the sense, and all
The winning softness of their sex is lost.
In them 'tis graceful to dissolve at woe;
With every motion, every word, to wave

Quick o'er the kindling cheek the ready blush;
And from the smallest violence to shrink,
Unequal, then the loveliest in their fears;
And by this silent adulation, soft,
To their protection more engaging man.
O may their eyes no miserable sight,
Save weeping lovers, see! a nobler game,
Thro' Love's enchanting wiles pursu'd, yet fled,
In chace ambiguous. May their tender limbs
Float in the loose simplicity of dress!
And, fashion'd all to harmony, alone
Know they to seize the captivated soul,
In rapture warbled from love-breathing lips;
To teach the lute to languish; with smooth step,
Disclosing motion in its every charm,
To swim along, and swell the mazy dance;
To train the foliage o'er the snowy lawn;
To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page;
To lend new flavour to the fruitful year,
And heighten Nature's dainties; in their race
To rear their graces into second life;
To give society its highest taste;
Well-order'd home man's best delight to make;
And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
With every gentle care-eluding art,
To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
And sweeten all the toils of human life:
This be the female dignity and praise.
Ye swains, now hasten to the hazel-bank;
Where, down yon dale, the wildly-winding brook
Falls hoarse from steep to steep. In close array,
Fit for the thickets, and the tangling shrub,

Ye virgins, come. For you their latest song
The woodlands raise; the clustering nuts for you
The lover finds amid the secret shade;
And, where they burnish on the topmost bough,
With active vigour crushes down the tree,
Or shakes them ripe from the resigning husk,
A glossy shower, and of an ardent brown,
As are the ringlets of Melinda's hair:
Melinda! form'd with every grace complete,
Yet these neglecting, above beauty wise,
And far transcending such a vulgar praise.
Hence from the busy joy-resounding fields,
In cheerful error, let us tread the maze
Of Autumn, unconfin'd; and taste, reviv'd,
The breath of orchard big with bending fruit.
Obedient to the breeze and beating ray,
From the deep-loaded bough a mellow shower
Incessant melts away. The juicy pear
Lies, in a soft profusion, scatter'd round.
A various sweetness swells the gentle race;
In species different, but in kind the same,
By Nature's all-refining hand prepar'd;
Of temper'd sun, and water, earth, and air,
In ever-changing composition mixt.
Such, falling frequent thro' the chiller night,
The fragrant stores, the wide-projected heaps
Of apples, which the lusty-handed year,
Innumerous, o'er the blushing orchard shakes.
A various spirit, fresh, delicious, keen,
Dwells in their gelid pores; and, active, points
The piercing cyder for the thirsty tongue:
Thy *native* theme, and boon inspirer too,

Phillips, *Pomona*'s bard, the second thou
Who nobly durst, in rhyme-unfetter'd verse,
With British freedom sing the British song;
How, from *Silurian* vats, high-sparkling wines
Foam in transparent floods; some strong, to cheer
The wintry revels of the labouring hind;
And tasteful some, to cool the summer-hours.
In this glad season, while his sweetest beams
The sun sheds equal o'er the meekened day;
Oh lose me in the green delightful walks
Of, Dodington, thy seat, serene and plain
Where simple Nature reigns, and every view,
Diffusive, spreads the pure *Dorsetian* downs
In boundless prospect; yonder shagg'd with wood,
Here rich with harvest, and there white with flocks!
Mean time the grandeur of thy lofty dome,
Far-splendid, seizes on the ravish'd eye.
New beauties rise with each revolving day;
New columns swell; and still the fresh Spring finds
New plants to quicken, and new groves to green.
Full of thy genius all! the Muses' seat;
Where in the secret bower, and winding walk,
For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.
Here wandering oft, fir'd with the restless thirst
Of thy applause, I solitary court
Th' inspiring breeze; and meditate the book
Of Nature, ever open; aiming thence,
Warm from the heart, to learn the moral song.
Here, as I steal along the sunny wall,
Where Autumn basks, with fruit empurpled deep
My pleasing theme continual prompts my thought,
Presents the downy peach, the shining plum,

The ruddy fragrant nectarine, and dark,
Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig.
The vine too here her curling tendrils shoots,
Hangs out her clusters glowing to the south,
And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky.
Turn we a moment Fancy's rapid flight
To vigorous soils, and climes of fair extent,
Where, by the potent sun elated high,
The vineyard swells refulgent on the day,
Spreads o'er the vale, or up the mountain climbs,
Profuse, and drinks amid the sunny rocks,
From cliff to cliff increas'd, the heighten'd blaze;
Low bend the weighty boughs. The clusters clear,
Half thro' the foliage seen, or ardent flame,
Or shine transparent; while Perfection breathes
White o'er the turgent film the living dew.
As thus they brighten with exalted juice,
Touch'd into flavour by the mingling ray;
The rural youth and virgins o'er the field,
Each fond for each to cull th' autumnal prime,
Exulting rove, and speak the vintage nigh.
Then comes the crushing swain; the country floats,
And foams unbounded with the mashy flood,
That by degrees fermented, and refin'd,
Round the rais'd nations pours the cup of joy:
The claret smooth, red as the lip we press
In sparkling fancy, while we drain the bowl;
The mellow-tasted burgundy; and quick,
As is the wit it gives, the gay champaign.
Now, by the cool declining year condens'd,
Descend the copious exhalations, check'd
As up the middle sky unseen they stole,

And roll the doubling fogs around the hill.
No more the mountain, horrid, vast, sublime,
Who pours a sweep of rivers from his sides,
And high between contending kingdoms rears
The rocky long division, fills the view
With great variety; but in a night
Of gathering vapour, from the baffled sense,
Sinks dark and dreary. Thence expanding far,
The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain:
Vanish the woods; the dim-seen river seems
Sullen, and slow, to roll the misty wave.
Even in the height of noon oppress'd the sun
Sheds weak, and blunt, his wide-refracted ray;
Whence glaring oft, with many a broadened orb,
He frights the nations. Indistinct on earth,
Seen thro' the turbid air, beyond the life,
Objects appear; and, wilder'd, o'er the waste
The shepherd stalks gigantic: till at last,
Wreath'd dun around, in deeper circles still
Successive closing, sits the general fog
Unbounded o'er the world; and, mingling thick,
A formless grey confusion covers all.
As when of old (so sung the Hebrew bard)
Light, uncollected, thro' the chaos urg'd
Its infant way; nor Order yet had drawn
His lovely train from out the dubious gloom.
These roving mists, that constant now begin
To smoke along the hilly country, these,
With weighty rains, and melted Alpine snows,
The mountain-cisterns fill, those ample stores
Of water, scoop'd among the hollow rocks, [play,
Whence gush the streams, the ceaseless fountains

And their unfailing wealth the rivers draw.
Some sages say, that, where the numerous wave
For ever lashes the resounding shore,
Drill'd thro' the sandy stratum, every way,
The waters with the sandy stratum rise;
Amid whose angles infinitely strain'd,
They joyful leave their jaggy salts behind,
And clear and sweeten, as they soak along.
Nor stops the restless fluid, mounting still,
Tho' oft amidst th' irriguous vale it springs;
But to the mountain courted by the sand,
That leads it darkling on in faithful maze,
Far from the parent-main, it boils again
Fresh into day; and all the glittering hill
Is bright with spouting rills. But hence this vain
Amusive dream! why should the waters love
To take so far a journey to the hills,
When the sweet valleys offer to their toil
Inviting quiét, and a nearer bed?
Or if, by blind ambition led astray,
They must aspire; why should they sudden stop
Among the broken mountain's rushy dells,
And, ere they gain its highest peak, desert
Th' attractive sand that charm'd their course so long?
Besides, the hard agglomerating salts,
The spoil of ages, would impervious choke
Their secret channels; or, by slow degrees,
High as the hills protrude the swelling vales:
Old Ocean too, suck'd thro' the porous globe,
Had long ere now forsook his horrid bed,
And brought *Deucalion*'s watry times again.

Say, then, where lurk the vast eternal springs,
That, like creating Nature, lie conceal'd
From mortal eye, yet with their lavish stores
Refresh the globe, and all its joyous tribes!
O thou pervading *Genius*, given to Man
To trace the secrets of the dark abyss,
O lay the mountains bare! and wide display
Their hidden structure to the astonish'd view!
Strip from the branching *Alps* their piny load,
The huge incumbrance of horrific woods
From *Asian Taurus*, from *Imaus* stretch'd
Athwart the roving *Tartar*'s sullen bounds!
Give opening *Hemus* to my searching eye,
And high *Olympus* pouring many a stream!
O from the sounding summits of the North,
The *Dofrine Hills*, thro' *Scandinavia* roll'd
To farthest *Lapland* and the frozen main;
From lofty *Caucasus*, far seen by those
Who in the *Caspian* and black *Euxine* toil;
From cold *Riphean Rocks*, which the wild *Russ*
Believes the [1] *stony girdle* of the world;
And all the dreadful mountains, wrapt in storm,
Whence wide *Siberia* draws her lonely floods;
O sweep th' eternal snows! Hung o'er the deep
That ever works beneath his sounding base,
Bid *Atlas*, propping heaven, as poets feign,
His subterranean wonders spread! unveil
The miny caverns, blazing on the day,

[1] The *Moscovites* call the *Riphean* mountains *Weliki Camenypoys*, that is, *the great stony Girdle*; because they suppose them to encompass the whole earth.

Of *Abyssinia*'s cloud-compelling cliffs,
And of the bending [1] *Mountains of the Moon!*
O'ertopping all these giant-sons of earth,
Let the dire *Andes*, from the radiant Line
Stretch'd to the stormy seas that thunder round
The southern pole, their hideous deeps unfold!
Amazing scene! Behold! the glooms disclose.
I see the rivers in their infant beds!
Deep, deep I hear them, lab'ring to get free!
I see the leaning strata, artful rang'd;
The gaping fissures to receive the rains,
The melting snows, and ever-dripping fogs.
Strow'd bibulous above I see the sands,
The pebbly gravel next, the layers then
Of mingled moulds, of more retentive earths,
The gutter'd rocks and mazy-running clefts,
That, while the stealing moisture they transmit,
Retard its motion, and forbid its waste.
Beneath th' incessant weeping of these drains,
I see the rocky siphons stretch'd immense,
The mighty reservoirs, of harden'd chalk,
Or stiff compacted clay, capacious form'd.
O'erflowing thence, the congregated stores,
The crystal treasures of the liquid world,
Thro' the stirr'd sands a bubbling passage burst;
And welling out, around the middle steep,
Or from the bottoms of the bosom'd hills,
In pure effusion flow. United, thus,
Th' exhaling sun, the vapour-burden'd air,

[1] A range of mountains in *Africa*, that surround almost all *Monomotapa*.

The gelid mountains, that to rain condens'd
These vapours in continual current draw,
And send them, o'er the fair-divided earth,
In bounteous rivers to the deep again,
A social commerce hold, and firm support
The full-adjusted harmony of things.

When Autumn scatters his departing gleams,
Warn'd of approaching Winter, gather'd, play
The swallow-people; and toss'd wide around,
O'er the calm sky, in convolution swift,
The feather'd eddy floats: rejoicing once,
Ere to their wintry slumbers they retire;
In clusters clung, beneath the mouldring bank,
And where, unpierc'd by frost, the cavern sweats.
Or rather into warmer climes convey'd,
With other kindred birds of season, there
They twitter cheerful, till the vernal months
Invite them welcome back: for, thronging, now
Innumerous wings are in commotion all.

Where the *Rhine* loses his majestic force
In *Belgian* plains, won from the raging deep,
By diligence amazing, and the strong
Unconquerable hand of Liberty,
The stork-assembly meets; for many a day,
Consulting deep, and various, ere they take
Their arduous voyage thro' the liquid sky:
And now their route design'd, their leaders chose,
Their tribes adjusted, clean'd their vigorous wings;
And many a circle, many a short essay,
Wheel'd round and round, in congregation full,
The figur'd flight ascends; and, riding high
Th' aërial billows, mixes with the clouds.

Or where the *Northern* ocean, in vast whirls,
Boils round the naked melancholy isles
Of farthest *Thulè*, and th' *Atlantic* surge
Pours in among the stormy *Hebrides*;
Who can recount what transmigrations there
Are annual made! what nations come and go!
And how the living clouds on clouds arise!
Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air,
And rude resounding shore, are one wild cry.
Here the plain harmless native his small flock,
And herd diminutive of many hues,
Tends on the little island's verdant swell,
The shepherd's sea-girt reign; or, to the rocks
Dire-clinging, gathers his ovarious food,
Or sweeps the fishy shore, or treasures up
The plumage, rising full, to form the bed
Of luxury. And here a while the Muse,
High-hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,
Sees Caledonia in romantic view:
Her airy mountains, from the waving main,
Invested with a keen diffusive sky,
Breathing the soul acute; her forests huge,
Incult, robust, and tall, by Nature's hand
Planted of old: her azure lakes between,
Pour'd out extensive, and of watry wealth
Full; winding deep, and green, her fertile vales;
With many a cool translucent brimming flood
Wash'd lovely, from the *Tweed* (pure *parent-stream*,
Whose pastoral banks first wak'd my *Doric* reed,
With, silvan *Jed*, thy tributary brook)
To where the north-inflated tempest foams
O'er *Orca*'s or *Betubium*'s highest peak:

Nurse of a people, in misfortune's school
Train'd up to hardy deeds; soon visited
By *Learning*, when before the *Gothic* rage
She took her western flight. A manly race,
Of unsubmitting spirit, wise, and brave;
Who still thro' bleeding ages struggled hard,
(As well unhappy Wallace can attest,
Great patriot-hero! ill-requited chief!)
To hold a generous undiminish'd state;
Too much, in vain! hence of unequal bounds
Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
O'er every land, for every land their life
Has flow'd profuse, their piercing genius plann'd,
And swell'd the pomp of peace their faithful toil.
As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
Bright over *Europe* bursts the *Boreal Morn*.
Oh is there not some patriot, in whose power
That best, that godlike luxury is placed,
Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn,
Thro' late posterity! some, large of soul,
To cheer dejected industry! to give
A double harvest to the pining swain,
And teach the labouring hand the sweets of toil!
How, by the finest art, the native robe
To weave; how, white as hyperborean snow,
To form the lucid lawn; with venturous oar,
How to dash wide the billow; nor look on,
Shamefully passive, while *Batavian* fleets
Defraud us of the glittering finny swarms,
That heave our friths, and crowd upon our shores;
How all-enlivening trade to rouse, and wing
The prosperous sail, from every growing port,

Uninjur'd, round the sea-incircled globe;
And thus, in soul united as in name,
Bid Britain reign the mistress of the deep!
Yes, there are such. And full on thee, Argyle,
Her hope, her stay, her darling, and her boast,
From her first patriots and her heroes sprung,
Thy fond imploring country turns her eye;
In thee, with all a mother's triumph, sees
Her every virtue, every grace combin'd,
Her genius, wisdom, her engaging turn,
Her pride of honour, and her courage try'd,
Calm, and intrepid, in the very throat
Of sulphurous war, on *Tenier*'s dreadful field.
Nor less the palm of peace inwreathes thy brow:
For, powerful as thy sword, from thy rich tongue
Persuasion flows, and wins the high debate;
While mix'd in thee combine the charm of youth,
The force of manhood, and the depth of age.
Thee, Forbes, too, whom every worth attends,
As truth sincere, as weeping friendship kind,
Thee, truly generous, and in silence great,
Thy country feels thro' her reviving arts,
Plann'd by thy wisdom, by thy soul inform'd;
And seldom has she known a friend like thee.
But see the fading many-colour'd woods,
Shade deepening over shade, the country round
Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk, and dun,
Of every hue, from wan declining green
To sooty dark. These now the lonesome Muse,
Low-whispering, lead into their leaf-strown walks,
And give the season in its latest view.
Mean-time, light-shadowing all, a sober calm

Fleeces unbounded æther, whose least wave
Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current: while illumin'd wide,
The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And thro' their lucid veil his softened force
Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time
For those whom Wisdom and whom Nature charm,
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
And soar above this little scene of things;
To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their feet;
To soothe the throbbing passions into peace;
And woo lone *Quiet* in her silent walks.
Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead;
And thro' the saddened grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain, to cheer the woodman's toil.
Haply some widowed songster pours his plaint,
Far, in faint warblings, thro' the tawny copse.
While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late
Swell'd all the music of the swarming shades,
Robb'd of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a full despondent flock;
With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
And nought save chattering discord in their note.
O let not, aim'd from some inhuman eye,
The gun the music of the coming year
Destroy; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes, a miserable prey,
In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground!
The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf

Incessant rustles from the mournful grove;
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
And slowly circles thro' the waving air.
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till chok'd, and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. Even what remain'd
Of bolder fruits falls from the naked tree;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

He comes! he comes! in every breeze the Power
Of Philosophic Melancholy comes!
His near approach the sudden-starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild-dejected air,
The softened feature, and the beating heart,
Pierc'd deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes!
Inflames imagination; thro' the breast
Infuses every tenderness; and far
Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
Crowd fast into the Mind's creative eye.
As fast the correspondent passions rise,
As varied, and as high: devotion rais'd
To rapture and divine astonishment;
The love of Nature unconfin'd, and, chief,
Of human race; the large ambitious wish,

To make them blest; the sigh for suffering worth,
Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn
Of tyrant pride, the fearless great resolve;
The wonder which the dying patriot draws,
Inspiring glory thro' remotest time;
Th' awakened throb for virtue and for fame;
The sympathies of love, and friendship dear;
With all the *social Offspring of the heart.*

Oh bear me then to vast embowering shades,
To twilight groves and visionary vales,
To weeping grottos and prophetic glooms,
Where angel-forms athwart the solemn dusk,
Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep along;
And voices more than human, thro' the void
Deep sounding, seize th' enthusiastic ear!

Or is this gloom too much! Then lead, ye Powers,
That o'er the garden and the rural seat
Preside, which shining thro the cheerful land
In countless numbers blest Britannia sees;
O lead me to the wide-extended walks,
The fair majestic paradise of Stowe [1]!
Not *Persian Cyrus,* on *Ionia*'s shore,
E'er saw such silvan scenes; such various art
By Genius fir'd, such ardent genius tam'd
By cool judicious Art, that in the strife
All-beauteous Nature fears to be outdone.
And there, O Pitt, thy country's early boast,
There let me sit beneath the sheltered slopes,
Or in that [2] *Temple* where, in future times,

[1] The seat of the Lord Viscount Cobham.
[2] The Temple of Virtue in *Stowe gardens.*

Thou well shalt merit a distinguish'd name;
And, with thy converse blest, catch the last smiles
Of Autumn beaming o'er the yellow woods.
While there with thee th' enchanted round I walk,
The regulated wild, gay Fancy then
Will tread in thought the groves of *Attic land*;
Will from thy standard taste refine her own,
Correct her pencil to the purest truth
Of Nature, or, the unimpassion'd shades
Forsaking, raise it to the human mind.
Or if hereafter she, with *juster* hand,
Shall draw the tragic scene, instruct her thou,
To mark the varied movements of the heart,
What every decent character requires,
And every passion speaks: O thro' her strain
Breathe thy pathetic eloquence! that moulds
Th' attentive Senate, charms, persuades, exalts,
Of honest Zeal th' indignant lightning throws,
And shakes Corruption on her venal throne.
While thus we talk, and thro' *Elysian Vales*
Delighted rove, perhaps a sigh escapes:
What pity, Cobham, thou thy verdant files
Of ordered trees should'st here inglorious range,
Instead of squadrons flaming o'er the field,
And long-embattled hosts! when the proud foe,
The faithless vain disturber of mankind,
Insulting *Gaul*, has rous'd the world to war;
When keen, once more, within their bounds to press
Those polish'd robbers, those ambitious slaves,
The British Youth would hail thy wise command,
Thy temper'd ardor and thy veteran skill.
The western sun withdraws the shortened day;
And humid evening, gliding o'er the sky,

In her chill progress, to the ground condens'd
The vapours throws. Where creeping waters ooze,
Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,
Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along
The dusky-mantled lawn. Meanwhile the moon
Full-orb'd, and breaking thro' the scatter'd clouds,
Shaws her broad visage in the crimson'd east.
Turn'd to the sun direct, her spotted disk,
Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,
And caverns deep, as optic tube descries,
A smaller earth, gives us his blaze again,
Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.
Now thro' the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.
Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
O'er the sky'd mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.
But, when half-blotted from the sky her light,
Fainting, permits the starry fires to burn
With keener lustre thro' the depth of heaven;
Or near extinct her deadened orb appears,
And scarce appears, of sickly beamless white;
Oft in this season, silent from the North
A blaze of meteors shoots: ensweeping first
The lower skies, they all at once converge
High to the crown of heaven, and all at once
Relapsing quick, as quickly reascend,
And mix and thwart, extinguish and renew,
All æther coursing in a maze of light.
From look to look, contagious thro' the crowd,
The panic runs, and into wondrous shapes

Th' appearance throws: armies in meet array,
Throng'd with aërial spears, and steeds of fire;
Till the long lines of full-extended war
In bleeding fight commixt, the sanguine flood
Rolls a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven.
As thus they scan the visionary scene,
On all sides swells the superstitious din,
Incontinent; and buzy Frenzy talks
Of blood and battle; cities over-turn'd,
And late at night in swallowing earthquake sunk,
Or hideous wrapt in fierce ascending flame;
Of sallow famine, inundation, storm;
Of pestilence, and every great distress;
Empires subvers'd, when ruling Fate has struck
Th' unalterable hour: even Nature's self
Is deem'd to totter on the brink of time.
Not so the man of philosophic eye,
And inspect sage; the waving brightness he
Curious surveys, inquisitive to know
The causes and materials, yet unfix'd,
Of this appearance, beautiful and new.
Now black and deep, the night begins to fall,
A shade immense. Sunk in the quenching gloom,
Magnificent and vast, are heaven and earth.
Order confounded lies; all beauty void;
Distinction lost; and gay variety
One universal blot: such the fair power
Of light to kindle and create the whole.
Drear is the state of the benighted wretch,
Who then, bewilder'd, wanders thro' the dark,
Full of pale fancies, and chimeras huge;
Nor visited by one directive ray,
From cottage streaming, or from airy hall.

Perhaps impatient as he stumbles on,
Struck from the root of slimy rushes, blue,
The wild-fire scatters round, or gather'd trails
A length of flame deceitful o'er the moss,
Whither decoy'd by the fantastic blaze,
Now lost and now renew'd, he sinks absorpt,
Rider and horse, amid the miry gulf;
While still, from day to day, his pining wife
And plaintive children his return await,
In wild conjecture lost. At other times,
Sent by the *better Genius* of the night,
Innoxious, gleaming on the horse's mane,
The meteor sits, and shews the narrow path,
That winding leads thro' pits of death, or else
Instructs him how to take the dangerous ford.

The lengthen'd night elaps'd, the morning shines
Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
Unfolding fair the last autumnal day.
And now the mounting sun dispels the fog;
The rigid hoar-frost melts before his beam;
And, hung on every spray, on every blade
Of grass, the myriad dew-drops twinkle round.
Ah see where robbed, and murder'd in that pit,
Lies the still heaving hive! at evening snatch'd
Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,
And fix'd o'er sulphur; while, not dreaming ill,
The happy people, in their waxen cells,
Sat tending public cares, and planning schemes
Of temperance, for Winter poor; rejoic'd
To mark, full-flowing round, their copious stores.
Sudden the dark oppressive steam ascends;
And, us'd to milder scents, the tender race,
By thousands, tumble from their honey'd domes,

Convolv'd, and agonizing in the dust.
And was it then for this you roam'd the Spring,
Intent from flower to flower? for this you toil'd
Ceaseless the burning Summer-heats away!
For this in Autumn search'd the blooming waste,
Nor lost one sunny gleam? for this sad fate!
O Man! tyrannic lord! how long, how long,
Shall prostrate Nature groan beneath your rage,
Awaiting renovation? when obliged,
Must you destroy? of their ambrosial food
Can you not borrow; and, in just return,
Afford them shelter from the wintry winds;
Or, as the sharp year pinches, with their own
Again regale them on some smiling day?
See where the stony bottom of their town
Looks desolate, and wild; with here and there
A helpless number, who the ruin'd state
Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death.
Thus a proud city, populous and rich,
Full of the works of peace, and high in joy,
At theatre or feast, or sunk in sleep,
(As late, *Palermo*, was thy fate) is seiz'd
By some dread earthquake, and convulsive hurl'd,
Sheer from the black foundation, stench-involv'd,
Into a gulf of blue sulphureous flame.
Hence every harsher sight! for now the day,
O'er heaven and earth diffus'd, grows warm, and high,
Infinite splendor! wide investing all.
How still the breeze! save what the filmy threads
Of dew evaporate brushes from the plain.
How clear the cloudless sky! how deeply ting'd
With a peculiar blue! th' ethereal arch
How swell'd immense! amid whose azure thron'd,

The radiant sun how gay! how calm below
The gilded earth! the harvest-treasures all
Now gather'd in, beyond the rage of storms,
Sure to the swain; the circling fence shut up;
And instant Winter's utmost rage defy'd:
While, loose to festive joy, the country round
Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth,
Shook to the wind their cares. The toil-strung youth
By the quick sense of music taught alone,
Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.
Her every charm abroad, the village-toast,
Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich,
Darts not unmeaning looks; and, where her eye
Points an approving smile, with double force,
The cudgel rattles, and the wrestler twines.
Age too shines out; and, garrulous, recounts
The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice; nor think
That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
Begins again the never-ceasing round.
Oh knew he but his happiness, of men
The happiest he! who far from public rage,
Deep in the vale, with a *choice Few* retir'd,
Drinks the pure pleasures of the Rural Life.
What tho' the dome be wanting, whose proud gate,
Each morning, vomits out the sneaking crowd
Of flatterers false, and in their turn abus'd!
Vile intercourse! What tho' the glittering robe,
Of every hue reflected light can give,
Or floating loose, or stiff with mazy gold,
The pride and gaze of fools! oppress him not!
What tho', from utmost land and sea purvey'd,
For him each rarer tributary life
Bleeds not, and his insatiate table heaps

With luxury and death! What tho' his bowl
Flames not with costly juice; nor sunk in beds,
Oft of gay care, he tosses out the night,
Or melts the thoughtless hours in idle state!
What tho' he knows not those fantastic joys,
That still amuse the wanton, still deceive;
A face of pleasure, but a heart of pain;
Their hollow moments undelighted all!
Sure peace is his; a solid life, estrang'd
To disappointment and fallacious hope:
Rich in content, in Nature's bounty rich,
In herbs and fruits: whatever greens the Spring,
When heaven descends in showers; or bends the
bough,
When Summer reddens, and when Autumn beams;
Or in the wintry glebe whatever lies
Conceal'd, and fattens with the richest sap:
These are not wanting; nor the milky drove,
Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale;
Nor bleating mountains; nor the chide of streams,
And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere
Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,
Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay:
Nor ought besides of prospect, grove, or song,
Dim grottos, gleaming lakes, and fountain clear.
Here too dwells simple Truth; plain Innocence;
Unsullied Beauty; sound unbroken Youth,
Patient of labour, with a little pleas'd;
Health ever-blooming; unambitious Toil;
Calm Contemplation, and poetic Ease.

Let others brave the flood, in quest of gain,
And beat, for joyless months, the gloomy wave.
Let such as deem it glory to destroy,

Rush into blood, the sack of cities seek;
Unpierc'd, exulting in the widow's wail,
The virgin's shriek, and infant's trembling cry.
Let some, far-distant from their native soil,
Urg'd or by want or harden'd avarice,
Find other lands beneath another sun.
Let *this* thro' cities work his eager way,
By legal outrage and establish'd guile,
The social sense extinct; and *that* ferment
Mad into tumult the seditious herd,
Or melt them down to slavery. Let *these*
Insnare the wretched in the toils of law,
Fomenting discord, and perplexing right,
An iron race! and *those* of fairer front,
But equal inhumanity, in courts,
Delusive pomp, and dark cabals, delight;
Wreath the deep bow, diffuse the lying smile,
And tread the weary labyrinth of state:
While he, from all the stormy passions free
That restless men involve, hears, and but hears,
At distance safe, the human tempest roar,
Wrapt close in conscious peace. The fall of kings,
The rage of nations, and the crush of states,
Move not the man, who, from the world escap'd,
In still retreats and flowery solitudes,
To Nature's voice attends, from month to month,
And day to day, thro' the revolving year;
Admiring, sees her in her every shape;
Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart;
Takes what she liberal gives, nor thinks of more.
He, when young Spring protrudes the bursting gems,
Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale
Into his freshen'd soul; her genial hours

He full enjoys; and not a beauty blows,
And not an opening blossom breathes in vain.
In Summer he, beneath the living shade,
Such as o'er frigid *Tempe* wont to wave,
Or *Hemus* cool, reads what the Muse, of these
Perhaps, has in immortal numbers sung;
Or what she dictates writes; and oft, an eye
Shot round, rejoices in the vigorous year.
When Autumn's yellow lustre gilds the world,
And tempts the sickled swain into the field,
Seiz'd by the general joy, his heart distends
With gentle throes; and, thro' the tepid gleams
Deep-musing, then he *best* exerts his song.
Even Winter wild to him is full of bliss,
The mighty tempest, and the hoary waste,
Abrupt and deep, stretch'd o'er the buried earth,
Awake to solemn thought. At night the skies,
Disclos'd and kindled by refining frost,
Pour every lustre on th' exalted eye.
A friend, a book, the stealing hours secure,
And mark them down for wisdom. With swift wing,
O'er land and sea Imagination roams;
Or Truth, divinely breaking on his mind,
Elates his being, and unfolds his powers;
Or in his breast heroic Virtue burns.
The touch of kindred too and love he feels;
The modest eye, whose beams on his alone
Extatic shine; the little strong embrace
Of prattling children, twin'd around his neck,
And emulous to please him, calling forth
The fond parental soul. Nor purpose gay,
Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns;
For happiness and true philosophy

Are of the social still, and smiling kind.
This is the life which those who fret in guilt,
And guilty cities, never knew; the life,
Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt,
When angels dwelt, and God himself, with Man!
Oh Nature! all-sufficient! over all!
Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works!
Snatch me to heaven! thy rolling wonders there,
World beyond world, in infinite extent,
Profusely scatter'd o'er the blue immense,
Shew me; their motions, periods, and their laws,
Give me to scan; thro' the disclosing deep
Light my blind way: the mineral *strata* there;
Thrust, blooming, thence the vegetable world;
O'er that the rising system, more complex,
Of animals; and higher still, the mind,
The varied scene of quick-compounded thought,
And where the mixing passions endless shift;
These ever open to my ravish'd eye:
A search, the flight of time can ne'er exhaust!
But if to that unequal; if the blood,
In sluggish streams about my heart, forbid
That *best* ambition; under closing shades,
Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook,
And whisper to my dreams. From Thee begin,
Dwell all on Thee, with Thee conclude my song;
And let me never, never stray from Thee!

WINTER.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed—Address to the Earl of Wilmington—First approach of Winter—According to the natural course of the season, various storms described—Rain—Wind—Snow—Thedriving of the snows: a man perishing among them; whence reflections on the wants and miseries of human life—The wolves descending from the Alps and Apennines—A winter-evening described: as spent by philosophers; by the country people; in the city—Frost—A view of Winter within the Polar Circle—A thaw—The whole concluding with moral reflections on a future state.

SEE, Winter comes, to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train;
Vapours, and *Clouds*, and *Storms*. Be these my theme,
These! that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred Glooms!
Congenial Horrors, hail! with frequent foot,
Pleas'd have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nurs'd by careless Solitude I liv'd,
And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,
Pleas'd have I wander'd thro' your rough domain;
Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst;
Or seen the deep fermenting tempest brew'd,

In the grim evening-sky. Thus pass'd the time,
Till thro' the lucid chambers of the South
Look'd out the joyous Spring, look'd out, and smil'd.
To thee, the patron of her first essay,
The Muse, O Wilmington! renews her song.
Since has she rounded the revolving year:
Skim'd the gay Spring; on eagle-pinions borne,
Attempted thro' the Summer-blaze to rise;
Then swept o'er Autumn with the shadowy gale;
And now among the wintry clouds again,
Roll'd in the doubling storm, she tries to soar;
To swell her note with all the rushing winds;
To suit her sounding cadence to the floods;
As is her theme, her numbers wildly great:
Thrice happy! could she fill thy judging ear
With bold description, and with manly thought.
Nor art thou skill'd in awful schemes alone,
And how to make a mighty people thrive;
But equal goodness, sound integrity,
A firm, unshaken, uncorrupted soul
Amid a sliding age, and burning strong,
Not vainly blazing for thy country's weal,
A steady spirit, regularly free;
These, each exalting each, the statesman light
Into the patriot; these, the public hope
And eye to thee converting, bid the Muse
Record what envy dares not flattery call.
Now when the cheerless empire of the sky
To *Capricorn* the *Centaur Archer* yields,
And fierce *Aquarius* stains th' inverted year;
Hung o'er the farthest verge of heaven, the sun
Scarce spreads o'er æther the dejected day.
Faint are his gleams, and ineffectual shoot

His struggling rays, in horizontal lines,
Thro' the thick air; as cloth'd in cloudy storm,
Weak, wan, and broad, he skirts the southern sky;
And, soon descending, to the long dark night,
Wide-shading all, the prostrate world resigns.
Nor is the night unwish'd; while vital heat,
Light, life, and joy, the dubious day forsake.
Meantime, in sable cincture, shadows vast,
Deep-ting'd and damp, and congregated clouds,
And all the vapoury turbulence of heaven,
Involve the face of things. Thus Winter falls,
A heavy gloom oppressive o'er the world,
Thro' Nature shedding influence malign,
And rouses up the seeds of dark disease.
The soul of Man dies in him, loathing life,
And black with more than melancholy views.
The cattle droop; and o'er the furrow'd land,
Fresh from the plough, the dun discolour'd flocks,
Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root.
Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad *Genius* of the coming storm;
And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
And fractur'd mountains wild, the brawling brook
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan
Resounding long in listening Fancy's ear.
Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
Wrapt in black glooms. First joyless rains obscure
Drive thro' the mingling skies with vapour foul;
Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods,
That grumbling wave below. The unsightly plain
Lies a brown deluge; as the low-bent clouds
Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted still

Combine, and, deepening into night, shut up
The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven,
Each to his home, retire; save those that love
To take their pastime in the troubled air,
Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
The cattle from the untasted fields return,
And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls,
Or ruminate in the contiguous shade.
Thither the houshold feathery people crowd,
The crested cock, with all his female train,
Pensive, and dripping; while the cottage-hind
Hangs o'er th' enlivening blaze, and taleful there
Recounts his simple frolic: much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
Without, and rattles on his humble roof.
Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swell'd,
And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread,
At last the rous'd-up river pours along:
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,
From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,
Tumbling thro' rocks abrupt, and sounding far;
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads,
Calm, sluggish, silent; till again, constrain'd
Between two meeting hills, it bursts a way,
Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;
There gathering triple force, rapid, and deep,
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.
Nature! great parent! whose unceasing hand
Rolls round the seasons of the changeful year,
How mighty, how majestic, are thy works!
With what a pleasing dread they swell the soul!
That sees astonish'd! and astonish'd sings!

Ye too, ye winds! that now begin to blow,
With boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.
Where are your stores, ye powerful beings! say,
Where your aërial magazines reserv'd,
To swell the brooding terrors of the storm?
In what far-distant region of the sky,
Hush'd in dead silence, sleep you when 'tis calm?
When from the pallid sky the sun descends,
With many a spot, that o'er his glaring orb
Uncertain wanders, stain'd; red fiery streaks
Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds
Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
Which master to obey: while rising slow,
Blank, in the leaden-colour'd east, the moon
Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns.
Seen thro' the turbid fluctuating air,
The stars obtuse emit a shivering ray;
Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,
And long behind them trail the whitening blaze.
Snatch'd in short eddies, plays the wither'd leaf;
And on the flood the dancing feather floats.
With broaden'd nostrils to the sky up-turn'd,
The conscious heifer snuffs the stormy gale.
Even as the matron, at her nightly task,
With pensive labour draws the flaxen thread,
The wasted taper and the crackling flame
Foretell the blast. But chief the plumy race,
The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
Retiring from the downs, where all day long
They pick'd their scanty fare, a blackening train
Of clamorous rooks thick-urge their weary flight,
And seek the closing shelter of the grove;

Assiduous, in his bower, the wailing owl
Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land.
Loud shrieks the soaring hern; and with wild wing
The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
Ocean, unequal press'd, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave,
And forest-rustling mountain, comes a voice,
That solemn-sounding bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurls the whole precipitated air,
Down, in a torrent. On the passive main
Descends th' etherial force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discolour'd deep.
Thro' the black night that sits immense around,
Lash'd into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn;
Meantime the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swell'd, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchor'd navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds, across the howling waste
Of mighty waters: now th' inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,
The wintry *Baltic* thundering o'er their head.
Emerging thence again, before the breath
Of full-exerted heaven they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts; if some sharp rock,
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

Nor less at land the loosened tempest reigns.
The mountain thunders; and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark way-faring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast.
Low waves the rooted forest, vex'd, and sheds
What of its tarnish'd honours yet remain;
Dash'd down, and scattered, by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling thro' the dissipated grove,
The whirling tempest raves along the plain;
And on the cottage thatch'd, or lordly roof,
Keen-fastening, shakes them to the solid base.
Sleep frighted flies; and round the rocking dome,
For entrance eager, howls the savage blast.
Then too, they say, thro' all the burthen'd air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That, utter'd by the demon of the night,
Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.
Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds commix'd
With stars swift-gliding sweep along that sky.
All Nature reels: till Nature's King, who oft
Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
And on the wings of the careering wind
Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm;
Then straight air, sea and earth, are hush'd at once.
As yet 'tis midnight deep. The weary clouds,
Slow-meeting, mingle into solid gloom.
Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,
Let me associate with the serious *Night*,
And *Contemplation*, her sedate compeer;

Let me shake off th' intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling senses all aside.
Where now, ye lying vanities of life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train!
Where are you now! and what is your amount!
Vexation, disappointment, and remorse.
Sad, sickening thought! and yet deluded Man,
A scene of crude disjointed visions past,
And broken slumbers, rises still resolv'd,
With new-flush'd hopes, to run the giddy round.
Father *of light and life! thou* Good supreme!
O teach me what is good! teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit! and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure,
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!
The keener tempests rise: and fuming dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend; in whose capacious womb
A vapoury deluge lies, to snow congeal'd.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along;
And the sky saddens with the gathered storm.
Thro' the hush'd air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin-wavering; till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
Put on their winter-robe, of purest white.
'Tis brightness all, save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low the woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid sun
Faint from the west emits his evening-ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid, and chill,

Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of Man. Drooping, the labourer-ox
Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tam'd by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The red-breast, sacred to the houshold gods,
Wisely regardful of th' embroiling sky,
In joyless fields, and thorny thickets, leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted Man
His annual visit. Half-afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is:
Till more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Tho' timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
Urg'd on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the bleak heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair: then, sad-dispers'd,
Dig for the wither'd herb thro' heaps of snow.
Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind,
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
With food at will; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict: for from the bellowing east,
In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
Sweeps up the burthen of whole wintry plains

At one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
Hid in the hollow of two neighbouring hills,
The billowy tempest whelms; till, upward urg'd,
The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipt with a wreath, high-curling in the sky.
As thus the snows arise; and foul, and fierce,
All Winter drives along the darkened air;
In his own loose-revolving fields, the swain
Disaster'd stands; sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown joyless brow; and other scenes,
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain:
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray:
Impatient flouncing thro' the drifted heaps,
Stung with the thoughts of home; the thoughts of home
Rush on his nerves, and call their vigour forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul!
What black despair, what horror fills his heart!
When for the dusky spot, which Fancy feign'd
His tufted cottage rising thro' the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track, and blest abode of Man:
While round him night resistless closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of cover'd pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the power of frost,
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smooth'd up with snow; and, what is land, unknown,

What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils,
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mix'd with the tender anguish Nature shoots
Thro' the wrung bosom of the dying Man,
His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.
In vain for him th' officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
The deadly Winter seizes; shuts up sense;
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snows, a stiffen'd corse,
Stretch'd out, and bleaching in the northern blast.
Ah little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;
Ah little think they, while the dance along,
How many feel, this very moment, death
And all the sad variety of pain!
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame! how many bleed,
By shameful variance betwixt man and man!
How many pine in want, and dungeon glooms;
Shut from the common air, and common use

Of their own limbs! how many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery! sore pierc'd by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty! how many shake
With all the fiercer tortures of the mind,
Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remorse,
Whence, tumbled headlong from the height of life,
They furnish matter for the tragic Muse!
Even in the vale, where Wisdom loves to dwell,
With Friendship, Peace, and Contemplation join'd,
How many, rack'd with honest passions, droop
In deep retir'd distress! how many stand
Around the death-bed of their dearest friends,
And point the parting anguish! Thought fond Man
Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
That one incessant struggle render life,
One scene of toil, of suffering, and of fate,
Vice in his high career would stand appall'd,
And heedless rambling impulse learn to think:
The conscious heart of Charity would warm,
And her wide wish Benevolence dilate;
The social tear would rise; the social sigh:
And into clear perfection, gradual bliss,
Refining still, the social passions work.
And here can I forget the generous [1] band,
Who, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail!
Unpity'd, and unheard, where Misery moans;

[1] The jail-committee, in the year 1729.

Where Sickness pines; where Thirst and Hunger burn,
And poor Misfortune feels the lash of Vice.
While in the land of Liberty, the land
Whose every street and public meeting glow
With open freedom, little tyrants rag'd:
Snatch'd the lean morsel from the starving mouth;
Tore from cold wintry limbs the tatter'd weed;
Even robb'd them of the last of comforts, sleep;
The free-born Briton to the dungeon chain'd,
Or, as the lust of cruelty prevail'd,
At pleasure mark'd him with inglorious stripes;
And crush'd out lives, by secret barbarous ways,
That for their country would have toil'd, or bled.
O great design! if executed well,
With patient care, and wisdom-temper'd zeal:
Ye sons of Mercy! yet resume the search;
Drag forth the legal monsters into light,
Wrench from their hands oppression's iron rod,
And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
Much still untouch'd remains; in this rank age,
Much is the patriot's weeding hand requir'd.
The toils of law, (what dark insidious men
Have cumbrous added to perplex the truth,
And lengthen simple justice into trade)
How glorious were the day that saw these broke,
And every man within the reach of right!
By wintry famine rous'd, from all the tract
Of horrid mountains which the shining *Alps*,
And wavy *Apennine*, and *Pyrenees*,
Branch out stupendous into distant lands;
Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave!

Burning for blood! bony, and ghaunt, and grim!
Assembling wolves in raging troops descend;
And, pouring o'er the country, bear along,
Keen as the north-wind sweeps the glossy snow.
All is their prize. They fasten on the steed,
Press him to earth, and pierce his mighty heart.
Nor can the bull his awful front defend,
Or shake the murdering savages away.
Rapacious, at the mother's throat they fly,
And tear the screaming infant from her breast.
The Godlike face of Man avails him nought.
Even beauty, force divine! at whose bright glance
The generous lion stands in softened gaze,
Here bleeds, a hapless undistinguish'd prey.
But if, appriz'd of the severe attack,
The country be shut up, lur'd by the scent,
On church-yards drear (inhuman to relate!)
The disappointed prowlers fall, and dig
The shrouded body from the grave; o'er which,
Mix'd with foul shades, and frighted ghosts, they howl.

Among those hilly regions, where, embrac'd
In peaceful vales, the happy *Grisons* dwell;
Oft, rushing sudden from the loaded cliffs,
Mountains of snow their gathering terrors roll.
From steep to steep, loud-thundering, down they come,
A wintry waste in dire commotion all;
And herds, and flocks, and travellers, and swains,
And sometimes whole brigades of marching troops,
Or hamlets sleeping in the dead of night,
Are deep beneath the smothering ruin whelm'd.

Now, all amid the rigours of the year,

In the wild depth of Winter, while without
The ceaseless winds blow ice, be my retreat,
Between the groaning forest and the shore
Beat by a boundless multitude of waves,
A rural, shelter'd, solitary scene,
Where ruddy fire and beaming tapers join
To cheer the gloom. There studious let me sit,
And hold high converse with the Mighty Dead;
Sages of ancient time, as gods rever'd,
As gods beneficent, who blest mankind
With arts, and arms, and humaniz'd a world.
Rous'd at th' inspiring thought, I throw aside
The long-liv'd volume; and, deep-musing, hail
The sacred shades, that slowly-rising pass
Before my wondering eyes. First Socrates,
Who, firmly good in a corrupted state,
Against the rage of tyrants *single* stood,
Invincible! calm reason's holy law,
That *voice* of God within th' attentive mind,
Obeying, fearless, or in life, or death:
Great moral teacher! *wisest of mankind!*
Solon the next, who built his commonweal
On equity's wide base, by *tender laws*
A lively people curbing, yet undamp'd,
Preserving still that quick peculiar fire,
Whence in the laurel'd field of finer arts,
And of bold freedom, they unequall'd shone,
The pride of smiling Greece and human-kind.
Lycurgus then, who bow'd beneath the force
Of strictest discipline, *severely wise,*
All human passions. Following him, I see,
As at *Thermopylæ* he glorious fell,

The [1] firm devoted Chief, who prov'd by deeds
The hardest lesson which the *other* taught.
Then Aristides lifts his honest front,
Spotless of heart, to whom th' unflattering voice
Of freedom gave the noblest name of *Just;*
In pure majestic poverty rever'd;
Who, even his glory to his country's weal
Submitting, swell'd a haughty [2] *Rival*'s fame.
Rear'd by his care, of softer ray, appears
Cimon sweet-soul'd, whose genius, rising strong,
Shook off the load of young debauch; abroad
The scourge of *Persian* pride, at home the friend
Of every worth and every splendid art;
Modest, and simple, in the pomp of wealth.
Then the last worthies of declining Greece,
Late call'd to glory, in *unequal* times,
Pensive, appear. The fair *Corinthian* boast,
Timoleon, happy temper! mild, and firm,
Who wept the *Brother* while the *Tyrant* bled.
And, equal to the best, the [3] Theban Pair,
Whose virtues, in *heroic concord* join'd,
Their country rais'd to freedom, empire, fame.
He too, with whom *Athenian* honour sunk,
And left a mass of sordid lees behind,
Phocion the *Good:* in public life severe,
To virtue still inexorably firm;
But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,
Sweet Peace and happy Wisdom smooth'd his brow,

1 Leonidas. See Leonidas, a Poem (by R. Glover), 2 vols. 8, Lond. 1770.

2 Themistocles.

3 Pelopidas, and Epaminondas.

Not Friendship softer was, nor Love more kind.
And he, the *last* of old Lycurgus' sons,
The generous victim to that vain attempt,
To save a rotten state, Agis, who saw
Even Sparta's self to servile avarice sunk.
The two *Achaian* heroes close the train;
Aratus, who a while relum'd the soul
Of fondly-lingering liberty in Greece;
And he her darling as her latest hope,
The *gallant* Philopœmen, who to arms
Turn'd the luxurious pomp he could not cure;
Or toiling in his farm, a simple swain;
Or, bold and skilful, thundering in the field.
Of rougher front, a mighty people come!
A race of heroes! in those virtuous times
Which knew no stain, save that with partial flame
Their *dearest* country they *too fondly* lov'd.
Her *better founder* first, the light of Rome,
Numa, who soften'd her rapacious sons:
Servius the *King,* who laid the solid base
On which o'er earth the *vast republic* spread.
Then the great consuls venerable rise.
The [1] Public Father who the *Private* quell'd,
As on the dread tribunal sternly sad.
He, whom his thankless country *could not* lose,
Camillus, only vengeful to her foes.
Fabricius, scorner of all-conquering gold;
And Cincinnatus, awful from the plough.
Thy [2] willing victim, *Carthage,* bursting loose

[1] Marcus Junius Brutus.
[2] Regulus.

From all that pleading Nature could oppose,
From a whole city's tears, by rigid Faith
Imperious call'd, and Honour's dire command.
Scipio, the *gentle chief,* humanely brave,
Who soon the race of spotless glory ran,
And, warm in youth, to the *poetic shade*
With *Friendship* and *Philosophy* retir'd.
Fully, whose powerful eloquence a while
Restrain'd the *rapid* fate of rushing Rome.
Unconquer'd Cato, virtuous in *extreme.*
And thou, unhappy Brutus, kind of heart,
Whose steady arm, by awful Virtue urg'd,
Lifted the *Roman steel* against thy *Friend.*
Thousands, besides, the tribute of a verse
Demand: but who can count the stars of heaven!
Who sing their influence on this lower world!
Behold, who yonder comes! in sober state,
Fair, mild, and strong, as is a vernal sun:
'Tis *Phœbus'* self, or else the Mantuan Swain!
Great Homer too appears, of daring wing,
Parent of song! and *equal* by his side,
The British Muse; join'd hand in hand they walk,
Darkling, full up the middle steep to fame.
Nor absent are those shades, whose skilful hand
Pathetic drew th' impassion'd heart, and charm'd
Transported *Athens* with the moral scene;
Nor those who, tuneful, wak'd th' enchanting lyre.
First of your kind! society divine!
Still visit thus my nights, for you reserv'd,
And mount my soaring soul to thoughts like yours.
Silence, thou lonely power! the door be thine;
See on the hallowed hour that none intrude,

Save a few chosen friends, who sometimes deign
To bless my humble roof, with sense refin'd,
Learning digested well, exalted faith,
Unstudy'd wit, and humour ever gay.
Or from the Muses' hill will Pope descend,
To raise the sacred hour, to bid it smile,
And with the social spirit warm the heart!
For tho' not sweeter his own Homer sings,
Yet is his life the more endearing song.
Where art thou, Hammond! thou the darling pride,
The friend and lover of the tuneful throng!
Ah why, dear youth, in all the blooming prime
Of vernal genius, where disclosing fast
Each active worth, each manly virtue lay,
Why wert thou ravish'd from our hope so soon!
What now avails that noble thirst of fame,
Which stung thy fervent breast! that treasur'd store
Of knowledge, early gain'd! that eager zeal
To serve thy country, glowing in the band
Of youthful patriots, who sustain her name!
What now, alas! that life-diffusing charm
Of sprightly wit! that rapture for the Muse,
That heart of friendship, and that soul of joy,
Which bade with softest light thy virtues smile!
Ah! only shew'd to check our fond pursuits,
And teach our humbled hopes that life is vain!
Thus in some deep retirement would I pass
The winter-glooms, with friends of pliant soul,
Or blithe, or solemn, as the theme inspir'd:
With them would search if Nature's boundless frame
Was call'd, late-rising from the void of night,

Or sprung *eternal* from th' eternal Mind,
Its springs, its laws, its progress, and its end.
Hence larger prospects of the beauteous whole
Would, gradual, open on our opening minds,
And each diffusive harmony unite
In full perfection to th' astonish'd eye.
Then would we try to scan the *moral world*,
Which, tho' to us it seems embroil'd, moves on
In higher order, fitted and impell'd
By Wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
In *general Good*. The sage Historic Muse
Should next conduct us thro' the deeps of time:
Shew us how empire grew, declin'd, and fell,
In scatter'd states; what makes the nations smile,
Improves their soil, and gives them double suns,
And why they pine beneath the brightest skies,
In Nature's richest lap. As thus we talk'd,
Our hearts would burn within us, would inhale
That portion of divinity, that ray
Of purest heaven, which lights the public soul
Of patriots and of heroes. But if doom'd,
In powerless humble fortune, to repress
These ardent risings of the kindling soul;
Then, even superior to ambition, we
Would learn the private virtues; how to glide
Thro' shades and plains, along the smoothest stream
Of rural life; or, snatch'd away by hope,
Thro' the dim spaces of futurity,
With earnest eye anticipate those scenes
Of happiness and wonder, where the mind,
In endless growth and infinite ascent,
Rises from state to state, and world to world.

But when with these the serious thought is foil'd,
We, shifting for relief, would play the shapes
Of frolic Fancy, and incessant form
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train
Of fleet ideas, never join'd before,
Whence lively *Wit* excites to gay surprise;
Or folly-painting *Humour*, grave himself,
Calls Laughter forth, deep-shaking every nerve.
Mean-time the village rouzes up the fire,
While well attested, and as well believ'd,
Heard solemn, goes the goblin-story round,
Till superstitious horror creeps o'er all.
Or, frequent in the sounding hall, they wake
The rural gambol. Rustic mirth goes round;
The simple joke that takes the shepherd's heart,
Easily pleas'd; the long loud laugh, sincere;
The kiss, snatch'd hasty from the sidelong maid,
On purpose guardless, or pretending sleep;
The leap, the slap, the haul; and, shook to notes
Of native music, the respondent dance.
Thus jocund fleets with them the winter-night.
The city swarms intense. The public haunt,
Full of each theme, and warm with mixt discourse,
Hums indistinct. The sons of Riot flow
Down the loose stream of false enchanted joy,
To swift destruction. On the rankled soul,
The gaming fury falls; and in one gulf
Of total ruin, honour, virtue, peace,
Friends, families, and fortune, headlong sink.
Up-springs the dance along the lighted dome,
Mix'd, and evolv'd, a thousand sprightly ways.
The glittering court effuses every pomp;

The circle deepens: beam'd from gaudy robes,
Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves;
While, a gay insect in *his* summer-shine,
The fop, light-fluttering, spreads his mealy wings.
Dread o'er the scene, the ghost of Hamlet stalks:
Othello rages; poor Monimia mourns;
And Belvidera pours her soul in love.
Deep-thrilling terror shakes; the comely tear
Steals o'er the cheek: or else the Comic Muse
Holds to the world a picture of itself,
And raises sly the fair impartial laugh.
Sometives she lifts her strain, and paints the scenes
Of beauteous life; whate'er can deck mankind,
Or charm the heart, in generous [1] Bevil shew'd.
O thou, whose wisdom, solid yet refin'd,
Whose patriot-virtues, and consummate skill
To touch the finer springs that move the world,
Join'd to whate'er the *Graces* can bestow,
And all *Apollo*'s animating fire,
Give thee, with pleasing dignity, to shine
At once the guardian, ornament, and joy,
Of polish'd life; permit the *rural Muse*,
O Chesterfield, to grace with thee her song!
Ere to the shades again she humbly flies,
Indulge her fond ambition, in thy train,
(For every Muse has in thy train a place)
To mark thy various full-accomplish'd mind:
To mark that spirit, which, with *British scorn*,

[1] A character in the Conscious Lovers, written by Sir Richard Steele.

Rejects th' allurements of corrupted power;
That elegant politeness, which excels
Even in the judgment of presumptuous *France*,
The boasted manners of her shining court;
That wit, the vivid energy of sense
The truth of Nature, which, with *Attic* point,
And kind well-temper'd satire, smoothly keen,
Steals through the soul, and without pain corrects.
Or, rising thence with yet a brighter flame,
O let me hail thee on some glorious day,
When to the listening senate, ardent, crowd
Britannia's sons to hear her pleaded cause.
Then drest by thee, more amiably fair,
Truth the soft robe of mild Persuasion wears:
Thou to assenting Reason giv'st again
Her own enlighten'd thoughts; call'd from the heart,
Th' obedient passions on thy voice attend:
And even reluctant party feels a while
Thy gracious power: as thro' the vary'd maze
Of eloquence, now smooth, now quick, now strong,
Profound and clear, you roll the copious flood.
To thy lov'd haunt return, my happy Muse:
For now, behold, the joyous winter-days,
Frosty, succeed; and thro' the blue serene,
For sight too fine, th' etherial nitre flies,
Killing infectious damps, and the spent air
Storing afresh with elemental life.
Close crowds the shining atmosphere, and binds
Our strengthen'd bodies in its cold embrace,
Constringent; feeds and animates our blood;
Refines our spirits, thro' the new-strung nerves,
In swifter sallies darting to the brain,

Where sits the soul, intense, collected, cool,
Bright as the skies, and as the season keen.
All Nature feels the renovating force
Of Winter, only to the thoughtless eye
In ruin seen. The frost-concocted glebe
Draws in abundant vegetable soul,
And gathers vigour for the coming year.
A stronger glow sits on the lively cheek
Of ruddy fire; and luculent along
The purer rivers flow; their sullen deeps,
Transparent, open to the shepherd's gaze,
And murmur hoarser at the fixing frost.
What art thou, frost! and whence are thy keen stores
Deriv'd, thou secret all-invading power,
Whom even th' illusive fluid cannot fly!
Is not thy potent energy, unseen,
Myriads of little salts, or hook'd, or shap'd
Like double wedges, and diffus'd immense
Thro' water, earth, and æther! Hence at eve,
Steam'd eager from the red horizon round,
With the fierce rage of Winter deep suffus'd,
An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool
Breathes a blue film, and in its mid career
Arrests the bickering stream. The loosen'd ice,
Let down the flood, and half dissolv'd by day,
Rustles no more; but to the sedgy bank
Fast grows, or gathers round the pointed stone,
A crystal pavement, by the breath of heaven
Cemented firm; till, seiz'd from shore to shore,
The whole imprison'd river growls below.
Loud rings the frozen earth, and hard reflects

A double noise; while, at his evening watch,
The village dog deters the nightly thief;
The heifer lows; the distant water-fall
Swells in the breeze; and, with the hasty tread
Of traveller, the hollow-sounding plain
Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,
Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
Shines out intensely keen; and, all one cope
Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
From pole to pole the rigid influence falls
Thro' the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
And seizes Nature fast. It freezes on,
Till Morn, late-rising o'er the drooping world,
Lifts her pale eyes unjoyous. Then appears
The various labour of the silent night:
Prone from the dripping cave and dumb cascade,
Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
The pendant icicle, the frost-work fair,
Where transient hues and fancy'd figures rise;
Wide-spouted o'er the hill the frozen brook,
A livid tract, cold-gleaming on the morn;
The forest bent beneath the plumy wave,
And by the frost refin'd the whiter snow,
Incrusted hard, and sounding to the tread
Of early shepherd, as he pensive seeks
His pining flock, or from the mountain-top,
Pleas'd with the slippery surface, swift descends.
On blithsome frolicks bent, the youthful swains,
While every work of Man is laid at rest,
Fond o'er the river crowd, in various sport
And revelry dissolv'd; where mixing glad,
Happiest of all the train! the raptur'd boy

Lashes the whirling top. Or, where the *Rhine*
Branch'd out in many a long canal extends,
From every province swarming, void of care,
Batavia rushes forth; and as they sweep,
On sounding skates, a thousand different ways,
In circling poise, swift as the winds, along,
The *then gay* land is madden'd all to joy.
Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow,
Pour a new pomp. Eager, on rapid sleds,
Their vigorous youth in bold contention wheel
The long-resounding course. Meantime, to raise
The manly strife, with highly-blooming charms,
Flush'd by the season, *Scandinavia*'s dames,
Or *Russia*'s buxom daughters, glow around.

Pure, quick, and sportful, is the wholesome day;
But soon elaps'd. The horizontal sun,
Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon;
And, ineffectual, strikes the gelid cliff:
His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
Nor feels the feeble touch. Perhaps the vale
Relents a while to the reflected ray;
Or from the forest falls the cluster'd snow,
Myriads of gems, that in the waving gleam
Gay-twinkle as they scatter. Thick around
Thunders the sport of those, who with the gun,
And dog impatient bounding at the shot,
Worse than the season, desolate the fields;
And, adding to the ruins of the year,
Distress the footed or the feathered game.

But what is this! our infant Winter sinks,
Divested of his grandeur, should our eye
Astonish'd shoot into the *Frigid Zone*;

Where, for relentless months, continual night
Holds o'er the glittering waste her starry reign.
There, thro' the prison of unbounded wilds,
Barr'd by the hand of Nature from escape,
Wide-roams the *Russian* exile. Nought around
Strikes his sad eye, but desarts lost in snow,
And heavy-loaded groves, and solid floods,
That stretch, athwart the solitary vast,
Their icy horrors to the frozen main,
And cheerless towns far-distant, never bless'd,
Save when its annual course the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich [1] *Cathay*,
With news of human-kind. Yet there life glows;
Yet cherish'd there, beneath the shining waste,
The furry nations harbour: tipt with jet,
Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press;
Sables of glossy black; and dark-embrown'd,
Or beauteous streakt with many a mingled hue,
Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts.
There, warm together press'd, the trooping deer
Sleep on the new-fallen snows; and, scarce his head
Rais'd o'er the heapy wreath, the branching elk
Lies slumbering sullen in the white abyss.
The ruthless hunter wants nor dogs nor toils,
Nor with the dread of sounding bows he drives
The fearful-flying race; with ponderous clubs,
As weak against the mountain-heaps they push
Their beating breast in vain, and piteous bray,
He lays them quivering on th' ensanguin'd snows,
And with loud shouts rejoicing bears them home.

[1] The old name for *China*.

There thro' the piny forest half-absorpt,
Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear,
With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn;
Slow-pac'd, and sourer as the storms increase,
He makes his bed beneath th' inclement drift,
And, with stern patience, scorning weak complaint,
Hardens his heart against assailing want.

Wide o'er the spacious regions of the North,
That see *Boötes* urge his tardy wain,
A boisterous race, by frosty [1] *Caurus* pierc'd,
Who little pleasure know and fear no pain,
Prolific swarm. They once relum'd the flame
Of lost mankind in polish'd slavery sunk,
Drove martial [2] horde on horde, with dreadful sweep
Resistless rushing o'er th' enfeebled South,
And gave the vanquish'd world another form.
Not such the sons of *Lapland*: wisely they
Despise th' insensate barbarous trade of war;
They ask no more than simple Nature gives,
They love their mountains and enjoy their storms.
No false desires, no pride-created wants,
Disturb the peaceful current of their days;
And thro' the restless ever-tortur'd maze
Of pleasure, or ambition, bid it rage.
Their rein-deer form their riches. These their tents,
Their robes, their beds, and all their homely wealth
Supply, their wholesome fare, and cheerful cups.
Obsequious at their call, the docile tribe
Yield to the sled their necks, and whirl them swift
O'er hill and dale, heap'd into one expanse

[1] The north-west wind.
[2] The wandering *scythian-clans*.

Of marbled snow, as far as eye can sweep
With a blue crust of ice unbounded glaz'd.
By dancing meteors then, that ceaseless shake
A waving blaze refracted o'er the heavens,
And vivid moons, and stars that keener play
With doubled lustre from the radiant waste,
Even in the depth of *Polar Night*, they find
A wondrous day: enough to light the chase,
Or guide their daring steps to *Finland*-fairs.
Wish'd Spring returns; and from the hazy South,
While dim Aurora slowly moves before,
The welcome sun, just verging up at first,
By small degrees extends the swelling curve,
Till seen at last for gay rejoicing months,
Still round and round his spiral course he winds,
And as he nearly dips his flaming orb,
Wheels up again, and reascends the sky.
In that glad season, from the lakes and floods,
Where pure [1] *Niemi*'s fairy mountains rise,
And fring'd with roses, [2] *Tenglio* rolls his stream,

[1] *M. de Maupertuis*, in his book on *the Figure of the Earth*, after having described the beautiful lake and mountain of *Niemi* in *Lapland*, says—"From this height "we had opportunity several times to see those vapours "rise from the lake which the people of the country call "*Haltios*, and which they deem to be the guardian spirits "of the mountains. We had been frighted with stories "of bears that haunted this place, but saw none. It "seem'd rather a place of resort for *Fairies* and *Genii* "than bears."

[2] The same author observes—"I was surprised to see "upon the banks of this river (the *Tenglio*) roses of as "lively a red as any that are in our gardens."

They draw the copious fry. With these, at eve,
They cheerful-loaded to their tents repair,
Where, all day long in useful cares employ'd,
Their kind unblemish'd wives the fire prepare.
Thrice happy race! by poverty secur'd
From legal plunder and rapacious power;
In whom fell Interest never yet has sown
The seeds of vice; whose spotless swains ne'er knew
Injurious deed, nor, blasted by the breath
Of faithless love, their blooming daughters woe.
  Still pressing on, beyond *Tornea*'s lake,
And *Hecla* flaming thro' a waste of snow,
And farthest *Greenland*, to the pole itself,
Where failing gradual life at length goes out,
The Muse expands her solitary flight,
And, hovering o'er the wild stupendous scene,
Beholds new seas beneath [1] another sky.
Thron'd in his palace of cerulean ice,
Here Winter holds his unrejoicing court,
And thro' his airy hall the loud misrule
Of driving tempest is for ever heard:
Here the grim tyrant meditates his wrath;
Here arms his winds with all-subduing frost;
Moulds his fierce hail, and treasures up his snows,
With which he now oppresses half the globe.
  Thence winding eastward to the *Tartar*'s coast,
She sweeps the howling margin of the main,
Where undissolving, from the first of time,
Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky,
And icy mountains, high on mountains pil'd,

[1] The other hemisphere.

Seem to the shivering sailor from afar,
Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds.
Projected huge, and horrid, o'er the surge,
Alps frown on Alps; or rushing hideous down,
As if old Chaos was again return'd,
Wide rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.
Ocean itself no longer can resist
The binding fury; but, in all its rage
Of tempest taken by the boundless frost,
Is many a fathom to the bottom chain'd,
And bid to roar no more: a bleak expanse,
Shagg'd o'er with wavy rocks, cheerless, and void
Of every life, that from the dreary months
Flies conscious southward. Miserable they
Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,
Take their last look of the descending sun!
While, full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
The long long night, incumbent o'er their heads,
Falls horrible. Such was the [1] Briton's Fate,
As with *first* prow (what have not Britons dar'd!)
He for the passage sought, attempted since
So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
By jealous Nature with eternal bars.
In these fell regions, in *Arzina* caught,
And to the stony deep his idle ship
Immediate seal'd, he with his hapless crew,
Each full exerted at his several task,
Froze into statues; to the cordage glued
The sailor, and the pilot to the helm. [stream
Hard by these shores, where scarce his freezing

[1] Sir Hugh Willoughby, sent by Queen Elizabeth to discover the north-east passage.

Rolls the wild *Oby*, live the last of men;
And, half-enliven'd by the distant sun,
That rears and ripens man, as well as plants,
Here human nature wears its rudest form.
Deep from the piercing season sunk in caves,
Here by dull fires, and with unjoyous cheer,
They waste the tedious gloom. Immers'd in furs,
Doze the gross race. Nor sprightly jest, nor song,
Nor tenderness they know; nor aught of life,
Beyond the kindred bears that stalk without.
Till morn at length, her roses drooping all,
Sheds a long twilight bright'ning o'er their fields,
And calls the quiver'd savage to the chase.
What cannot active government perform,
New-moulding Man! Wide-stretching from these shores,
A people savage from remotest time,
A huge neglected empire, one vast Mind,
By Heaven inspir'd, from Gothic darkness call'd.
Immortal Peter! first of monarchs! he
His stubborn country tam'd, her rocks, her fens,
Her floods, her seas, her ill-submitting sons;
And while the fierce *Barbarian* he subdu'd,
To more exalted soul he raised the *Man*.
Ye shades of ancient heroes, ye who toil'd
Thro' long successive ages to build up
A lab'ring plan of state, behold at once
The wonder done! behold the matchless prince!
Who left his native throne, where reign'd till then
A mighty shadow of unreal power;
Who greatly spurn'd the slothful pomp of courts;
And roaming every land, in every port,

His sceptre laid aside, with glorious hand
Unweary'd plying the mechanic tool,
Gather'd the seeds of trade, of useful arts,
Of civil wisdom, and of martial skill.
Charg'd with the stores of *Europe*, home he goes;
Then cities rise amid th' illumin'd waste;
O'er joyless desarts smiles the rural reign;
Far-distant flood to flood is social join'd;
Th' astonish'd *Euxine* hears the *Baltic* roar;
Proud navies ride on seas that never foam'd
With daring keel before; and armies stretch
Each way their dazzling files, repressing here
The frantic *Alexander* of the North,
And awing there stern Othman's shrinking sons.
Sloth flies the land, and *Ignorance*, and *Vice*,
Of old dishonour proud: it glows around,
Taught by the Royal Hand that rous'd the whole,
One scene of arts, of arms, of rising trade:
For what his wisdom plann'd, and power enforc'd,
More potent still, his great *example* shew'd.
Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point,
Blow hollow-blustering from the South. Subdu'd,
The frost resolves into a trickling thaw.
Spotted the mountains shine; loose sleet descends,
And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
O'er rocks and woods, in broad brown cataracts,
A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once;
And, where they rush, the wide-resounding plain
Is left ones slimy waste. Those sullen seas,
That wash th' ungenial pole, will rest no more
Beneath the shackless of the mighty North;

But, rousing all their waves, resistless heave.
And hark! the lengthening roar continuous runs
Athwart the rifted deep: at once it bursts,
And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
Ill fares the bark with trembling wretches charg'd,
That, tosss'd amid the floating fragments, moors
Beneath the shelter of an icy isle,
While night o'erwhelms the sea, and horror looks
More horrible. Can human force endure
Th' assembled mischiefs that besiege them round!
Heart-gnawing hunger, fainting weariness,
The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
Now ceasing, now renew'd with louder rage,
And in dire echoes bellowing round the main.
More to embroil the deep, Leviathan
And his unwieldy train, in dreadful sport,
Tempest the loosened brine, while thro' the gloom,
Far from the bleak inhospitable shore,
Loading the winds, is heard the hungry howl
Of famish'd monsters, there awaiting wrecks.
Yet Providence, that *ever-waking Eye,*
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
Of mortals lost to hope, and lights them safe
Thro' all this dreary labyrinth of Fate.
'Tis done! — dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquer'd year.
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!
How dumb the tuneful! Horror wide extends
His desolate domain. Behold, fond Man!
Behold thy pictur'd life; pass some few years,
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,

Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
And shuts the scene. Ah! whither now are fled
Those dreams of greatness! those unsolid hopes
Of happiness! those longings after fame!
Those restless cares! those busy bustling days!
Those gay-spent, festive nights! those veering thoughts,
Lost between good and ill, that shar'd thy life!
All now are vanish'd! Virtue sole survives,
Immortal, never-failing friend of Man,
His guide to happiness on high — And see!
'Tis come, the glorious morn! the second birth
Of heaven and earth! awakening Nature hears
The *new-creating word*, and starts to life,
In every heightened form, from pain and death
For ever free. *The great eternal scheme*,
Involving all, and in a *perfect whole*
Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,
To Reason's eye refin'd clears up apace.
Ye vainly wise! ye blind presumptuous! now,
Confounded in the dust, adore that Power
And Wisdom oft arraign'd: see now the cause,
Why unassuming Worth in secret liv'd,
And dy'd neglected; why the good man's share
In life was gall and bitterness of soul;
Why the lone widow and her orphans pin'd
In starving solitude; while Luxury,
In palaces, lay straining her low thought,
To form unreal wants; why heaven-born Truth,
And Moderation fair, wore the red marks
Of Superstition's scourge; why licens'd Pain,

That cruel spoiler, that embosom'd foe,
Imbitter'd all our bliss. Ye good distrest!
Ye noble few! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up a while,
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deem'd *evil,* is no more:
The storms of Wintry Time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all!

A HYMN.

THESE, as they change, Almighty Father, these,
Are but the *varied* God. The rolling year
Is full of Thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
Thy beauty walks, Thy tenderness and love.
Wide flush the fields; the softening air is balm;
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And every sense, and every heart, is joy.
Then comes Thy glory in the Summer-months,
With light and heat refulgent. Then Thy sun
Shoots full perfection thro' the swelling year;
And oft Thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks;
And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
By brooks and groves, in hollow-whispering gales,
Thy bounty shines in Autumn unconfin'd,
And spreads a common feast for all that lives.
In Winter awful Thou! with clouds and storms
Around Thee thrown, tempest o'er tempest roll'd,
Majestic darkness! on the whirlwind's wing,
Riding sublime, Thou bidst the world adore,
And humblest Nature with Thy northern blast.
Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine,
Deep-felt, in these appear! a simple train,
Yet so deligthful mix'd with such kind art,
Such beauty and beneficence combin'd,
Shade, unperceiv'd, so softening into shade,
And all so forming an harmonious whole,
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.

But wandering oft, with brute unconscious gaze,
Man marks not Thee, marks not the mighty hand
That, ever-busy, wheels the silent spheres,
Works in the secret deep; shoots, steaming, thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
Feeds every creature; hurls the tempest forth;
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
With transport touches all the springs of life.
Nature, attend! join every living soul
Beneath the spacious temple of the sky,
In adoration join; and, ardent, raise
One general song! To Him, ye vocal gales,
Breathe soft, whose Spirit in your freshness breathes:
Oh talk of Him in solitary glooms!
Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely-waving pine
Fills the brown shade with a religious awe.
And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar,
Who shake th' astonish'd world, lift high to heaven
Th' impetuous song, and say from whom you rage.
His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills;
And let me catch it as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid, and profound;
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale; and thou, majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,
Sound His stupendous praise, whose greater voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.
Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and
flowers,
In mingled clouds, to Him, whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints.

Ye forests bend, ye harvests wave, to Him;
Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart,
As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.
Ye that keep watch in heaven, as earth asleep
Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations, while your angels strike,
Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre.
Great source of day! best image here below
Of thy Creator, ever pouring wide,
From world to world, the vital ocean round,
On Nature write with every beam his praise.
The thunder rolls: be hush'd the prostrate world;
While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
Bleat out afresh, ye hills; ye mossy rocks,
Retain the sound: the broad responsive low,
Ye valleys, raise; for the Great Shepherd reigns;
And his *unsuffering* kingdom yet will come.
Ye woodlands all, awake: a boundless song
Burst from the groves; and when the restless day,
Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
Sweetest of birds! sweet Philomela! charm
The listening shades, and teach the night his praise.
Ye, chief, for whom the whole creation smiles,
At once the head, the heart, and tongue of all,
Crown the great hymn! in swarming cities vast,
Assembled men, to the deep organ join
The long-resounding voice, oft-breaking clear,
At solemn pauses, through the swelling base;
And, as each mingling flame increases each,
In one united ardour rise to heaven.
Or if you rather choose the rural shade,
And find a fane in every sacred grove,

There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre,
Still sing the God of Seasons as they roll.
For me, when I forget the darling theme,
Whether the blossom blows, the summer-ray
Russets the plain, *inspiring* Autumn gleams,
Or Winter rises in the blackening east,
Be my tongue mute, may fancy paint no more,
And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat!
Should Fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
Rivers unknown to song, where first the sun
Gilds *Indian* mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on th' *Atlantic* isles, 'tis nought to me;
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste as in the city full;
And where He vital breathes there must be joy.
When even at last the solemn hour shall come,
And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
I cheerful will obey! there, with new powers,
Will rising wonders sing; I cannot go
Where Universal Love not smiles around,
Sustaining all yon orbs and all their sons,
From *seeming Evil* still educing *Good*,
And *Better* thence again, and *Better* still,
In infinite progression —— But I lose
Myself in Him, in Light ineffable:
Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise.

THE END.

NOTES
TO
THE SEASONS
OF
THOMSON,
By PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

PERHAPS no poems have been read more generally, or with more pleasure, than the Seasons of Thomson. This was a natural consequence of the objects which they present, and of the genius which they display. In descriptive poetry, or as a poetical painter, I do not know an equal to Thomson. The pictures of other poets, comparatively with his, often want precision, colour, and expression: because they are more copies from books than originals; rather secondary descriptions, than transcripts made immediately from the living volume of Nature. With her Thomson was intimately acquainted: and as his judgment, his sentiment, his taste, are equal to his diligent observation, the whole groupe of objects in his description is always peculiarly striking, or affecting, from their natural and happy relation to one another—Hence, peculiarly in this poet, a little natural object, apparently insignificant of itself, takes consequence from its association to others, and very much heightens and enforces the awful or beautiful assemblage. Thomson's poetry is still more nobly recommended to his readers, by

a most amiable morality and religion; by a rational and sublime adoration of God; and by a tender, ardent, and universal love of man. His powers in exhibiting natural objects, often strongly inculcate his morality and religion; —the painter and the sage are very fortunate auxiliaries to each other. The structure of his verse is, characteristically, his own;—true genius disdains all mechanical and servile imitation: that verse is always perspicuous, energetic; — fully and clearly expressive of his ideas;— not so easy, always, and flowing in its close as we could wish — The favourite objects of his mind did not captivate his imagination alone; they actuated and marked his manners and his life. He was a most benevolent as well as a great man: — he was a poet of the first class; — he was an honour to Scotland, to Europe, to mankind.

SPRING.

Page 38, line 5. 'O Hartford,' &c. This lady well merited Thomson's poetical encomium. She was equally distinguished by the graces of the person and those of the mind. Her humanity, and her generous application to queen Caroline, saved the life of the unfortunate Savage; when, without that interposition, he would have fallen a victim to a mistaken jury, misled by an unfeeling judge; —'Hard words and hanging if your judge is Page'— See Johnson's excellent Life of Savage. I by no means think that inhumanity is a characteristic of Mr. Boswell; —therefore I was surprised to find, by some bold and ill-grounded conjectures of this biographer, that the fate of Savage has been singularly calamitous; — the injuries which he suffered while living were horrible; — repose is not allowed to his ashes; they are cruelly violated; and the charge of imposture is dragged into the society of his more venial faults and vices — See Boswell's Life of

Johnson, where he makes a particular mention of Savage. That he was really the son of Lord Rivers and the Countess of Macclesfield we have no solid foundation to doubt: indeed, from some arguments which Mr. Boswell feels himself obliged to introduce, and which of themselves confirm the fact, that gentleman seems half to recant the charge which he had brought against the memory of Savage. We might have expected, that from his implicit submission to every Αυτὸς ἔφη of his great Aristotle, he would have been more tender (I should have said more just) to the philosopher's departed friend.

P. 39, l. 1. 'The mountains lift,' &c.—The apparent and gradual elevation of the verdure of the mountains is, in some degree, exemplified in the monosyllables of this line.

P. 41, l. 21. 'Now from the town'—The objects and properties of the capital, and of the country, are here finely contrasted in sentiment, and in poetical perspective and description.

P. 43, l. 1. 'The north-east spends his rage.'—In this vernal shower, and in the imagery which relates to it, our poet's descriptive fertility and art are in all their strength and beauty.

——————'Man superior walks,
'Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
'And looking lively gratitude.'

This charming, moral, and pious picture, is a just and severe reproof to those unfeeling souls who pay not a tribute of ardent gratitude and praise to the goodness and greatness of their Creator. The *many-twinkling* leaves is an expression in this description. Mr. Gray applies the same epithet to a different image. Poets, while they wish to be strong, should not forget to be elegant and easy. A fault in the great author of the Seasons, is

sometimes a stiffness, a harshness of style:—compound epithets should be frugally used; otherwise it will be evident that they glide not naturally into the genius of our language; Thomson uses them too freely.

P. 46, l. 27. 'The lion's—horrid heart—was *meekened:*' a word happily made by Thomson; agreeably to the analogy of our language; and expressively in sound of the disposition which it conveys.

P. 47, l. 10.

——— 'Reason, half-extinct,
'Or impotent, or else *approving*, sees
'The foul disorder '———

That foul disorder can never, surely, be seen by *reason* with *approbation.*

P. 49, l. 18. 'But man whom nature form'd,' &c.—This pathetic passage from a muse who was eminent for humanity, if it cannot make us Pythagoreans or Gentoos, should at least make us the merciful protectors of the animal creation while we suffer them to live.

P. 52, l. 26.

'There let the classic page thy fancy lead
'Thro' rural scenes; such as the Mantuan swain
'Paints in the matchless harmony of song.
'Or catch, thyself, the landscape, gliding swift
'Athwart Imagination's vivid eye.'

This is a remarkably beautiful passage, which closes with l. 6, in p. 53 — we should not only be led by the classic page through rural scenes; but, like Thomson, we should be attentive to catch the landscapes ourselves.

P. 53, l. 26. 'Those looks *demure;*'—an epithet which is never now used (and perhaps should not have been used by our poet) in pure praise.

P. 57, l. 6. 'Call up the tuneful nations' —— The harmony of the poetical cadence here corresponds with the melody to which it alludes.

P. 59, l. 28. ——— 'Even so a gentle pair,' &c.

How can the rich and powerful read this most affecting simile, without determining to inquire into and relieve the distresses of their obscure and poor, but patient and virtuous neighbours! The process of the feathered tribes, in the continuation and care of their species, was never described in so just and captivating a manner as it is by Thomson.

P. 65, l. 8.

'What is this *mighty Breath*, ye sages, say,' &c.
——————'what, but God!
'Inspiring God!'

If the wretch who denies the existence of the Deity, without having absolutely lost his reasoning faculty, attentively surveys the works of the creation, and attentively reads the Seasons of Thomson; — if this wretch can possibly still be an atheist, we must not impute the monstrous opinion to a weakness of understanding, but to a mind totally darkened by vice and despair.

P. 66, l. 31.

'These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,
'Thy heart informed by Reason's purer ray,
'O Lyttleton, the friend!'

This whole passage is fraught with the generous enthusiasm of poetry and friendship. Its picturesque parts are likewise admirable. The nobleman here celebrated well deserved the panegyric of Thomson. He was a mild and benevolent man, an elegant scholar, a distinguished orator, an eminent writer both in verse and prose. Johnson is grossly unjust to his literary merit. But what attention

is to be paid to the hypercritic, who tells us that Akenside's Odes will never be read!

P. 68, l. 26.

'Flush'd by the spirit of the genial year,' &c.

In his descriptions of love too, of its effects on the animal world and on the human species, of the effects of the unfortunate and the successful, of the licentious and the lawful passion, our poet is without a rival. These descriptions are very particular; they are circumstantial, yet they never flag; they are every where characterized with fine painting, with a constant and warm attention to nature; with poetical tenderness, ardour, and elevation. The concluding passage of the Spring, which begins with this line,

'But happy they, the happiest of their kind!'

presents to the mind of the reader two connubial examples, which are forcible enough to affect a Dutchman and to reclaim a profligate.

I am unavoidably limited in the extent of my Notes on the Seasons, otherwise I should have paid to one of the most amiable and greatest of poets a more assiduous attention. I am unfeignedly willing to acknowledge, that by the circumscription to which I must submit, more will be lost to my own private satisfaction than to the information or entertainment of the public. Notes, indeed, to the work of true poets, are principally useful when they illustrate facts, which, by a long lapse of time, may not be generally known; to such facts there is hardly one allusion in the Seasons; their author judiciously never refers you but to celebrated persons or events. His sentiments and descriptions are (what poetry should ever be) always perspicuous. The mind is rather distracted than delighted by the poet whose thoughts and pictures must be illustrated by frequent annotations.—Such a poet is but a tyro in the divine art; indeed he deserves not the honourable and distinguishing name.

SUMMER.

AMONG the many futile, absurd, and ungenerous passages in Johnson's Lives of the Poets, is the following remark on the Seasons—'The great defect of the Seasons, 'is want of method; but for this I know not that there 'was any remedy. Of many appearances subsisting all 'at once, no rule can be given why one should be 'mentioned before another; yet the memory wants 'the help of order, and the curiosity is not excited by 'suspense or expectation.'—I must beg leave to assert, that what I have now quoted is absolute nonsense. Therefore, as it is not entitled to a particular refutation, let it be refuted by the poem which now engages my attention, and which is longer by several hundred lines than the other Seasons. It has all the order and method that any sensible and liberal critic, that any reader, except a dry formal pedant, could wish. The poet surveys, paints and enforces, with a glowing and animated pencil, with an affecting and sublime morality and religion, a summer's morning, noon, evening and night, as they succeed one another in the course of nature (for surely the *many appearances* in *any* season do not *subsist all at once*). If this is not method, I know not what is. The most admired poems have their episodes, which by no means destroy or confuse the order of the principal fable. His description of noon is expanded with an interesting picture of the torrid zone, to which he devotes four hundred and sixty lines. The rich and ardent colouring of this picture is congenial with the climate which it represents. If these lines are a digression, they are naturally connected with the main subject; they never lose sight of it, therefore they keep it continually in the mind of the reader. For his moral and pious apostrophes originating from his immediate object, for his charming episodes derived from the

same sources, he cannot be reasonably taxed with a neglect of regularity. To point out the particular beauties of his Celadon and Amelia, of his Damon and Musidora, would be to affront the good sense and good sentiments of my readers. They are beautiful tributes to virtue, to piety, to our best affections. They alone evince the falsehood and the folly of another strange observation of our arbitrary critic; — 'that it does not appear that he had much sense of the pathetic.' — The person who wrote this of Thomson, must either have lost all remembrance of his author when he wrote it, or his own mind must have been ill adapted to sympathize with pathetic writing. The pathetic is one of the leading characteristics of the Seasons, it inspired the life and the numbers of this glorious Caledonian poet. What feeling soul can read that letter from him to his sister, for which we are obliged to Mr. Boswell and to Dr. Johnson, without tears! It is of infinitely more value than the life in which it is inserted. I would not do the least deliberate injustice to Johnson; he remarks Thomson's want of the pathetic (but he remarks it in general terms, and without restriction) where he is criticising his tragedies. But even when applied to them, the remark is not just. I do not say that he does not often in his dramas throw out a strain of studied eloquence and declamation, which would have been better substituted by the simple and concise language of nature;—yet they are, in several places, strongly marked with the pathetic:—the whole tenor of his Edward and Eleonora (the acting of which play was prevented by ministerial resentment and injustice) is eminently pathetic.

After having described Summer, and its effects in our fortunate island, he very forcibly, and I think with great regularity, expatiates on those inestimable blessings which are peculiarly enjoyed by the inhabitants of Britain: he then pays his tribute of judiciously distinguished eulogy (and certainly with no incoherent deviation from his

ruling objects) to those illustrious characters, who have distinguished and elevated the annals of this country: and he closes the Season with a peroration to philosophy, the noble instructor and guide of life;—a peroration which is characterized with elegance, and with a fine enthusiasm. All this I beg leave to call regularity, and a beautiful method.

What our formidable critic means by telling us that, in reading the Seasons, 'memory wants the help of order, 'and that curiosity is not excited by suspense or expecta-'tion,' it is difficult to say. It is so unsubstantial and random a censure, that it may be applied with equal propriety to the best poem of Virgil or of Pope. To excite that eager and anxious curiosity, suspense, and expectation, which it is incumbent on the writer of a novel or of a drama to raise, did not enter into the plan of the Seasons; yet in reading them, every mind that has a genuine taste for poetry is always warmly interested and affected as it goes along; it proceeds with a delightful expectation;—for it expects to meet with most excellent poetry; and it is never disappointed;—with poetry which flows in a natural and easy succession of sentiments and imagery: by Thomson *lecta potenter erat res;* therefore,

Nec facundia deseret hunc, nec lucidus ordo.
Horace's *Art of Poetry*, v. 40.

According to the edict of Johnson, 'the diction of 'Thomson is too exuberant, and sometimes may be 'charged with filling the ear more than the mind.' I should be sorry to lose a single expression of that most amiable and immortal poet; there is not a feeble, not a superfluous word in the Seasons; not a word which does not contribute to inform the mind, to enrich the fancy, or to improve the heart.

I have taken this opportunity, with pleasure, to vindicate in some degree the transcendent merit and fame of one

of our first poets from the arbitrary censures of a rude, vulgar, and dogmatical chair. For the liberty which I have taken with a critic, who could never have been deemed an oracle but through the infatuation of prescription, I foresee the strictures with which I am to be assailed by the stupidity of prejudice, and by the servility of fashion and imitation, with a calm, and, consequently, with a proper contempt.

P. 77, l. 24.

'With what an awful world-revolving power,' &c.

This passage includes a beautiful theology; the first general, and the subsequent immediate and still active providence of the Deity.

P. 78, l. 32. 'To lie in dead oblivion'—a fine incentive to vigilance, to a moral and intellectual œconomy of time. I lay a particular stress on those passages which inculcate virtue and piety; from the practice of them alone flows our genuine happiness:—and while we practise them, we have lenitives for the worst calamities.

P. 85, l. 28.

'Full nature swarms with life.'——

We have the same thought amplified by Pope:

See through this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth!

Pope's *Essay on Man*, Ep. I, v. 233.

P. 93, l. 6.

'These are the haunts of Meditation!'——

Here, in forty-two verses, are magnificently displayed the great faculties and talents of a great poet,—invention, high moral enthusiasm, and rapture. I cannot deny to myself the pleasure of quoting a similar and very beautiful passage from Milton:

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen both when we wake, and when we sleep;

All these, with ceaseless praise, his works behold
Both day and night. How often from the steep
Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard
Celestial voices, to the midnight air
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator! oft, in bands,
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic number joined, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven.

Paradise Lost, B. IV, 677.

A shepherd, in the Aminta of Tasso, indulges a strain of sentiment and imagery congenial with that of Thomson and Milton, to which I now refer. The reader will be pleased to accept it from my translation of that Italian poem:

Together oft we cultivate the muses;
And with their scenes enrich our simple life.
Oft do the muses, on a beauteous eve,
The sky serene, and drowsy nature hushed,
Vouchsafe celestial sounds to rural ears;
And raise our humble minds above their stretch,
With such warm fancy, such ethereal forms,
As 'scape the vulgar intellectual eye.

Aminta of Tasso, act I, scene 2.

P. 103, l. 14.
'Nor less thy world, Columbus,' &c.
Striking pictures of the vast American rivers.

P. 111, l. 26. '*Savag'd* by woe:'—P. 112, l. 17. '*Lurid* 'grove'—Words made by Thomson. This species of coining offends a mere philologist, when it does not violate the genius of our language; but when it conveys vigorous sense or sentiment, it gives no offence to a mind susceptible of poetical pleasure.

P. 121, l. 3.

—' The clouds, those beauteous robes of heaven,
' Incessant rolled into romantic shapes,
' *The dream of waking fancy!*'

These last expressions very happily convey a very happy thought.

P. 128, l. 15.

' O thou! by whose almighty nod' —

An address to the Supreme Being, worthy of a poet, a patriot, and a Christian.

P. 129, l. 11.

' For ever running, an enchanted round,' &c.

This passage of seventeen lines would have sufficient energy to reclaim vice, to banish extravagant luxury, and to substitute virtuous œconomy and universal and active benevolence in its place, if inveterate habit, operating on the selfish depravity of human nature, could be subdued by the power of numbers.

AUTUMN.

OUR best judgment, or our unsupported fancy, among these four beautiful poems, may have supposed a superior excellence of one to another; though perhaps that superior excellence cannot with justice be determined. The Winter of our author has, I think, been commonly preferred to his other Seasons; I am not without my respect for public opinion, though it is frequently, at least for a time, but mere opinion. I own that, after the most careful perusal of these poems (and they may be read with a most lively and animated pleasure every revolving year), I never could find that any one of them was eminently, or at all distinguished above the rest by

genius and composition. It is probable that the Winter of Thomson has always been particularly admired, because it was the first Season which he gave to the world; the first enterprise of his poetical talents which opened his way to fortune and to fame. If his Autumn, the poem which is now under my view, is in the least degree inferior to his other Seasons, for that inferiority (which I do not venture to suppose without an humble veneration of the manes of this divine poet) two reasons may be assigned. A muse, of whom it may be said, with a far juster encomium than of that wild rhapsodist Pindar, that she 'sails with supreme dominion through the azure deep of air;' —the muse, who can soar with such majesty, reverses her direction, in the poem which is now before me, and dives, perhaps with too much diligence and minuteness, into the depths of our globe, into the arcana of nature. As soon as a poet becomes scientific, he rather forgets, and leaves his province, because he ceases to address the common knowledge and the common sentiments of mankind. Hence the Loves of the Plants, surveyed by Dr. Darwin with the microscopic eye of a naturalist, are one of the most improper and absurd subjects for poetry that can be imagined. — Perhaps no poet could have been equal to Thomson, in the eloquent and interesting manner in which, in his Autumn, he has brought science to the attention of his readers:—his philosophical poetry is as superior to that of Lucretius, as the theory of the Caledonian poet is superior to that of the Roman. —This poem may not affect and strike the mind of the reader so forcibly as the other three, for another reason: the inferiority, if there is any, may be imputed to the subject.—Autumn, perhaps, has not such bold and various characteristics as nature and (consequently) art have given to Spring, to Summer, and to Winter.

In his description of the fate of the savage, the following lines must be very pathetically expressive to every feeling

mind, which, in civilized and polite society, is unsupported by the dearest ties of human life:

P. 137, l. 27.

—'*Home* he had not; home is the resort
'Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
'Supporting and supported, polished friends
'And dear relations mingle into bliss.'

P. 138, l. 11.

'Gave the tall ancient forest to his *ax*'—

This is a harsh word for the conclusion of a verse: it is to be regretted that Thomson (who, when he pleases, can be most delightfully harmonious), did not oftener close his verse, especially where the mind was naturally to make a pause, with an easy, liquid, and flowing word, that might have corresponded with the soft and temporary intellectual repose. This observation may seem trivial or whimsical to those who have not maturely considered the nature of poetry, or whose souls may not be formed for all the pleasure which it affords. Horace tells us, that to put the merit of poetry to an infallible test, we must throw it into a prosaic order: and Dr. Warton has adopted the rule of the great Roman critic. In experience, however, this rule by no means holds good. Poetical sound, melody, harmony, have effects, in a certain manner and proportion, similar and analogous to those of music. And these combinations and effects are essential to poetry; it is not poetry without them. The influence of a number of fine verses on the mind of the elegant reader, will be greatly enforced or enfeebled by the happy or unfortunate choice and station of a single word. The stream of Thomson's poetry is always clear and vigorous, but it is too disdainful of an easy flow.

P. 140, l. 7.

'Forming art, *imagination-flush'd.*'

The epithet is expressive, but the compound is harsh;

the bold and abrupt sound too grates the ear, and therefore hurts and repels the mind, when, at the end of this energetic paragraph, it wished to melt away, with the poet, down a more gentle and dying fall.

P. 141, l. 12. 'The lovely young Lavinia,' &c.—

Simplicity, elegance, pathos, and the humane and generous virtues, mark this charming tale. When our poet wrote it, his fancy must have been warmly impressed with the beautiful history of Ruth. That history presents to us a most engaging picture of primitive manners and virtues. Its simplicity steals upon and captivates the mind.—How affecting are the following artless and easy expressions, because they convey all the sincerity and tenderness of the soul!—'And Ruth said [to Naomi], Intreat me not 'to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; 'for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest 'I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy 'God my God:—where thou diest will I die, and there 'will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, 'if aught but death part thee and me!'—Ruth, chap. I, ver. 16. What a pleasing description of early times does the following verse contain!—'And behold Boaz 'came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The 'Lord be with you! And they answered him, The Lord 'bless thee!'—Ruth, chap. II, ver. 4. The reciprocal language of modern Christian farmers and their reapers is, I fear, very different from that of these good old Jews. The fine spirit of the Hebrew narrative lost nothing while it was transfused by Thomson.

P. 146, l. 26. '*Claimant* children dear:'—a word made by Thomson.

The paragraphs beginning on pages 147 and 149, do great and equal honour to the genius and to the heart of the author. The interest which he takes in the fate of

the animal creation, strongly recommends his poetry to every good and truly religious man. If a soul, disgraced and debased with hunting, had any feeling left, what answer would it make to this address of our poet to beasts of prey!

P, 148, l. 8.

'Upbraid, ye ravening tribes, *our* wanton rage,
'For hunger kindles *you*, and lawless want;
'But lavish fed, in Nature's bounty roll'd,
'To joy at anguish, and delight in blood,
'Is what *your* horrid bosoms never knew.'

His description of the persecuted stag is all in his own warm sentiment and fine colouring. These lines are remarkably beautiful and pathetic, while the stag is pursued and harassed.

P. 149, l. 21.

'He sweeps the forest oft; and sobbing sees
'The glades, mild-opening to the golden day;
'Where, in kind contest, with his butting friends
'He wont to struggle, or his loves enjoy.'

If the *Æthiopian* could *change his skin*, or *the leopard his spots*, or if a Nimrod could be humanized, the following picture of the last distress and death of this beautiful animal would make him feel something like sympathy.

P. 149, l. 29.

'What shall he do! his once so vivid nerves,
'So full of buoyant spirit, now no more
'Inspire the course; but fainting breathless toil,
'Sick, seizes on his heart: he stands at bay;
'And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
'The big round tears run down his dappled face;
'He groans in anguish; while the growling pack,
'Blood-happy, hang at his fair jutting chest,
'And mark his beauteous checker'd sides with gore.'

P. 153, l. 22.

'But if the rougher sex by this fierce sport
'Is hurried wild,' &c.

Here, in forty eloquent and persuasive lines, he shows how abhorrent the natural softness of the fair sex is from the sports of the field; and he strongly inculcates to that sex an undivided attention to their proper duties and accomplishments. Nothing can be more disgusting than a Harpalyce to a man of experience and reflection. The character includes indifference to her husband and children, a general depravity and barbarity of heart: — roughness of disposition in a man may be combined with some generous and noble qualities; for in him the influence of reason is vigorous, and not easily eradicated: but when woman, in any instance, habitually violates humanity, she gradually loses all sentiment; or, in other words, the foundation of her virtues.

P. 156, l. 25. Thomson undoubtedly, with the strictest truth, here describes the tenor and habit of his poetical life:

——————'I solitary court
'Th' inspiring breeze; and meditate the book
'Of Nature, ever open; aiming, thence,
'Warm from the heart, to learn the moral song.'

P. 167, l. 15.

'He comes! he comes! in every breeze the Power
'Of Philosophic Melancholy comes!'

Here two passages, or paragraphs, which consist of seventy-three lines, are highly distinguished by poetical spirit and fire, by invention, and by a glorious eulogy on the illustrious father of our present minister.

P. 172, l. 23.

'Ah see where robbed and murder'd,' &c.

A beautiful complaint over the destruction of a bee-hive. Such a master of the pathetic is Thomson, that he

actually excites a very lively compassion in the breast of the reader for the fate of these little people!

P. 174, l. 20.

'Oh knew he but his happiness,' &c.

From this line to the end of the Autumn flows a strain of moral and philosophical poetry, which perhaps was never excelled. It woos every heart which is not corrupted by bad habits and passions, to innoxious rural pleasures and to rural tranquillity; to that knowledge which purifies and exalts the heart and mind, and rivets the invaluable principles of virtue and religion.

WINTER.

On a careful re-perusal of this Season, it seems to deserve all the distinguished admiration and praise which it has received. Its unrivalled excellence was perhaps an effect which was produced in the mind of Thomson by the Season itself, parsimonious of the productions of the earth, but fruitful of poetry.—The objects of Winter peculiarly strike sensibility and sentiment with the solemn and the awful; we are then deeply affected with the tremendous majesty of the Divine Maker of Winter; —and hence the true poet will, at this season, if he takes it for his subject, display the noblest excellences of his powerful art; his strains will be naturally consecrated to the grave, the moral, and the sublime. This Season presents no gay, flourishing, and sportive scenes; — consequently the bard retires more into himself now than at other times, owes more to his own faculties and acquirements, is more intent on the works and achievements of the human and eternal mind. These remarks, I hope, will be thought to have some foundation, by him who reads the poem of Winter with that close and warm attention which it highly deserves.

His address to the Season and to the Earl of Wilmington, at the beginning of Winter, is extremely pathetic and harmonious.

P. 183, l. 8.

'When from the pallid sky,' &c.

The various presaging marks of the storm, and the description of the storm itself, are equally distinguished by their accuracy, and by their force; they are striking characteristics of their great object: they form one of the many eminent examples of that penetrating and indefatigable attention to nature, and of those astonishing powers to paint her, in which Thomson is without a rival. In the following lines popular superstition and credulity are converted into fine poetical machinery:

'Then too, they say, thro' all the burden'd air,
'Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
'That, utter'd by the demon of the night,
'Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.'

P. 185, l. 31.

'Let *me* associate with the serious Night,' &c.

An address to man, and another to God, which would produce excellent effects in our conduct, if attention and reformation were to be commonly expected from habitual folly and vice.

P. 187, l. 7.

——————'One alone,
'The red-breast,' &c.

This little, timorous, and beautiful bird, gradually domesticating with man in the desolate season, deserved the tribute of Thomson's picturesque, humane, and most amiable muse.

P. 188, l. 6.

—' As thus the snows arise ; and foul, and fierce,
' All Winter drives along the darkened air, ' &c.

This description of the man perishing in the storm of snow has arrested the attention and the affections of every reader in whose composition there was a spark of feeling.—We enter into all the hopes and fears, into all the recollections, into all the fond images, into all the distress, anguish, and despair of the dying person. With him we feel the icy hand of death creeping over our frame.—Our poet, as a sagacious, most observing, and sympathising man, not only made himself master of all the situations and sentiments of his fellow-creatures ; so comprehensive was his mind, and so exquisite was his sensibility, that he seems to have seen and felt even the process of the vegetable world, and the sufferings and enjoyments, the ideas and the thoughts of the animal creation. A short quotation or two will illustrate and justify my remark. In his Summer, after the sheep, the soft fearful people, have been forced to commit their woolly sides to the flood,

' Heavy, and dripping, to the breezy brow
' Slow move the harmless race ; where, as they spread
' Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
' *Inly disturb'd, and wond'ring what this wild*
' *Outrageous tumult means*, their loud complaints
' The country fill ; and, toss'd from rock to rock,
' Incessant bleatings run around the hills, ' &c.

Summer, p. 88, l. 31.

I regret that the limits of these Notes will not allow me to quote, from Autumn, the whole elegy on the ill-fated hive of bees.

' Ah see where robbed, and murder'd in that pit,
' Lies the still heaving hive ! at evening snatch'd,
Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,

' And fix'd o'er sulphur; *while, not dreaming ill,*
' *The happy people, in their waxen cells,*
' *Sat tending public cares, and planning schemes*
' *Of temperance, for winter poor; rejoic'd,*
' *To mark, full-flowing round, their copious stores.*
' Sudden the dark oppressive steam ascends;
' *And, us'd to milder scents, the tender race,*
' *By thousands, tumble from their honey'd domes,*
' *Convolv'd, and agonizing in the dust.*
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
' See where the stony bottom of their town
' Looks desolate and wild; with here and there
' *A helpless number, who the ruin'd state*
' *Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death.*'

Autumn, *p. 172, l. 23.*

The provident faculties which are here given to bees, will not seem extravagant to those who reflect on the wonderful art and conduct of those animals, and who recollect that some accurate observers of nature

Esse apibus partem Divinæ Mentis, et haustus
Æthereos dixere.

Virgil, *Georg. IV, ver. 221.*

P. 191, l. 21.

' Much is the patriot's weeding hand required.'

Here are six lines that should be properly considered by the legislators of a country whose freedom and secure enjoyment of property have been long and often boasted.

P. 192, l. 31.

' Now, all amid the rigours of the year,' &c.

From this to page 201, line 21, we are entertained with strains of poetry distinguishedly fine: — to several of the celebrated characters of Greece and Rome their proper and respective eulogies are given: some of our

own worthies have their merited distinction; the heroes and heroines of the tragic muse are presented to us with dramatic force!—and we are invited, by all the eloquence and power of numbers, to a contemplation of the great objects of morality and of natural religion.

P. 206, l. 2.

'Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear'—

From this instance too, it appears that our admirable poet surveyed the situations and sentiments of animals with a most pervading imagination.

P. 211, l. 12.

——————'Repressing here
The frantic Alexander of the North,' &c.

The Czar Peter was a very great man; though he had very exceptionable, very detestable qualities. On the banks of the Pruth indeed he behaved in an imprudent and despicable manner. I am sorry that Thomson hath sacrificed the glory of Charles to the Russian hero. The sacrifice was worthy of Lord Chesterfield; but it was unworthy of a poet. However, I am not to learn, from this instance, than even poets are apt to be very slow and parsimonious in acknowledging and defending the merit of the unfortunate.

P. 212, l. 25.

'Tis done! dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
'And reigns tremendous o'er the conquered year,' &c.

It is not in the magic of poetical numbers more powerfully to captivate us to an active humanity, to gratitude to heaven, and to a perfect and serene resignation to its will, than we are charmed to these virtues in the close of the Seasons. The subsequent hymn to the Deity does equal and infinite honour to the poetical genius, and to the feeling and sublime piety of its author; — it at least

equals Mr. Pope's Universal Prayer. Indeed the merit of these two prayers is of different kinds. The reasoning and argumentative substance of Pope's prayer is adorned and enforced with the beauty and dignity of numbers. Sentiment and imagery are the essential constituents of Thomson's hymn; and to his versification they owe all the colouring and expression that versification can bestow.

'Thomson's Poem of Liberty (says Dr. Johnson in his Life of our poet) when it first appeared I tried to read, and soon desisted; I have never tried again, and therefore will not hazard either praise or censure.'— As that poem was written by the author of the Seasons, I am persuaded that the reader will easily forgive me for offering him here some remarks on its merit, and on the fastidious manner in which it was treated by Dr. Johnson. Most poets have their conspicuous master-piece; the Seasons are Thomson's, beyond all controversy. The spirit and style with which a poem is executed, depends greatly on the judgment and taste with which its fable is chosen and arranged. The plan of Liberty, which unfortunately is minutely and circumstantially historical, spreads a damp and a languor through several parts of the poem. I must likewise acknowledge, that the composition of its language often wants the perspicuity of the author of the Seasons. It is, however, as often marked with the manner of a great master; and it has several passages which are completely worthy of the poet by whom they were written. It may seem surprising that a lexicographer had not patience to peruse the poem of Liberty; he who one day told the author of these Notes, that he liked muddling work: that was his expression. For the disgust, however, which this unfortunate poem soon gave him, I can easily account to those who are at all acquainted with his real habits and character.

With all his achievements in the republic of letters, he gave way to long intervals of the most unmanly and

torpid indolence. This indolence prevented him from being properly acquainted with several books which are carefully perused by every man who deserves the title of a scholar. I was not a little surprised when he told me that he had only read parts of my Lord Clarendon's History. If he recoiled from a history which is written strongly in favour of towering prerogative, we need not wonder that he was violently repelled from a poem which is fraught with encomiums on equal liberty. For the other reason, undoubtedly, why he so soon desisted after he had begun to read that poem, was his prejudiced and ungenerous dislike of the glorious subject: he treats the word Liberty, which, properly understood, comprehends every thing that is dear to man, with an indecent and contemptible contempt in his Lives of the Poets, and in several of his other works. The well-proportioned and fair fabric of our constitution is half-way between the star-chamber of Samuel Johnson and the tap-room of Thomas Paine.

There are several very fine passages in the Poem of Liberty; but Johnson, as I have already observed, from his inveterate prejudices, disliked the subject. Surely a poem which is adorned with the following imagery and language, might have been perused by one whose talents were too often obliged to submit to works of mere industry and labour.—Liberty thus describes the Genius of the Deep, whom she met as she was advancing towards Britain, after she had left the more northern nations:

——————As o'er the wave-resounding deep,
To my near reign, the happy isle I steered,
With easy wing; behold, from surge to surge,
Stalked the tremendous Genius of the Deep;
Around him clouds in mingled tempest hung;
Thick-flashing meteors crowned his-starry head,
And ready thunder reddened in his hand;
As from it streamed, compressed the glowing cloud.

Where'er he looked, the trembling waves recoiled:
He needs but strike the conscious flood, and shook,
From shore to shore, in agitation dire,
It works his dreadful will. To me his voice
(Like that hoarse blast that round the cavern howls)
Mixed with the murmurs of the falling main,
Addressed, began, &c.———

Liberty, part IV, ver. 293.

What I have written of Dr. Johnson, I have written without any anxiety about the illiberal cavils and censures which it may excite; for it has been written without any sinister influence, dispassionately and impartially in the defence of civil and literary truth. I admire those writings of that great man which deserve admiration: —his Preface to his Dictionary is a model of fine composition; his Ramblers are treasures of knowledge, of wisdom, and of eloquence; an eloquence, however, which is often loaded and injured by such heavy and cumberous words as have never been used, and will never be adopted by any truly elegant writer. I cannot say much of his Rasselas, though it is a favourite of Mr. Boswell. It excites not warm attention; and it is declamatory without being ardent. His Idlers are entertaining; and they are in general free from that pedantry of style which is too apt to deform his writings. His life of Savage is, in every respect, an interesting, amiable, and beautiful production. He has given proofs to the world of his very uncommon poetical abilities.—When he wrote the lives of our poets, he evidently shewed that his faculties were on the decline, and that he was intoxicated with his consequence and with his fame. As his intellect was losing its vigour, his political and superstitious prejudices were gaining strength; and by them, not by judgment and taste, he determined the merit or demerit of his authors. Those lives, likewise, are hastily and superficially written; in them, and innumerable instances, he sacrilegiously

endeavours, but in vain, to tear from the tombs of the illustrious dead those laurels which had been planted round them by the fine and infallible enthusiasm of human nature. When the present busy and paltry machinations of interest shall act no more, when the talents of the departed and of the living shall be justly appreciated by posterity, it will be found that those lives are a disgrace to English literature.

THE END.

THE

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